



The YOUNG  
RUSSIAN  
CORPORAL

PAUL IOCOLEVITCH



Class 77 640

Book 1-3

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THE YOUNG RUSSIAN  
CORPORAL

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[See page 57]

"IOGOLEVITCH," HE SAID, "I AM VERY MUCH OBLIGED TO YOU FOR THE ENTERTAINMENT YOU HAVE GIVEN US"

# THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

*The Story of the Youngest  
Veteran of the War*

BY

CORPORAL PAUL IOGOLEVITCH  
*A Soldier in the Russian Army at Twelve*

ILLUSTRATED



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## CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	WHO SAID SLACKER? . . . . .	I
II.	FIRST BLOOD . . . . .	15
III.	A LEAP IN THE DARK . . . . .	37
IV.	I CAPTURE A GENERAL . . . . .	48
V.	I JOIN THE "FIGHTING THIRD DRAGOONS" . . . . .	60
VI.	DEAD MAN'S SHOES . . . . .	76
VII.	COLD STEEL . . . . .	97
VIII.	SURROUNDED BY GERMANS . . . . .	111
IX.	ON PATROL . . . . .	135
X.	THE BATTLE OF SAVENDIKI . . . . .	157
XI.	WHEELLESS WAGONS AND FIRELESS GUNS . . . . .	181
XII.	A DISASTROUS FURLough . . . . .	203
XIII.	SOUVENIRS . . . . .	216
XIV.	TWO AGAINST TWENTY . . . . .	233
XV.	I MEET THE CZAR . . . . .	245
XVI.	REVOLUTION . . . . .	253
XVII.	ACROSS SIBERIA . . . . .	276
XVIII.	IN THE LAND OF THE FREE . . . . .	285
XIX.	UNDER THE AMERICAN EAGLE . . . . .	307



## ILLUSTRATIONS

"LOGOLEVITCH" HE SAID, "I AM VERY MUCH OBLIGED TO YOU FOR THE ENTERTAINMENT YOU HAVE GIVEN US."	<i>Frontispiece</i>
I SAW THE HORSE REAR HIGH IN THE AIR, AND THEN THE HUN THREW UP HIS HANDS CONVULSIVELY . . . . .	<i>Page</i> 32, 33
THE NEXT MOMENT SOMEBODY'S STRONG HAND HAD GRABBED ME BY THE NECK . . . . .	" 71
"WHAT WAS THE MEANING OF THE THREE HORSES I NOTICED NOT FAR FROM HERE?" . . . . .	" 85
"YOU POOR FIDDLER! DON'T YOU KNOW A DEAD MAN'S BOOTS ARE THE LUCKIEST YOU CAN WEAR?" . . . "	" 95
BEFORE ME WAS A HUGE GERMAN BRANDISHING HIS GUN "	105
AT LENGTH WE MANAGED TO GET OUT OF THE OPEN FIELD AND FOUND SHELTER IN THE WOODS . . . "	" 129
AS I SNATCHED IT FROM THE TABLE I DETECTED A STRANGE MOVEMENT OF THE OTHER TABLE-CLOTH "	" 151
"GO UP-STAIRS AND WAIT UNTIL THE GERMANS COME!" I ORDERED . . . . .	" 171
"I AM A POOR BOY AND I WANT TO EARN SOME MONEY IN THE VILLAGE BY PLAYING MY VIOLIN" . . . . .	" 183
WHEN I REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS I WAS RIDING ON A HORSE, STRAPPED ACROSS HIS BACK, HEAD DOWN- WARD . . . . .	" 201
WHEN I CAME TO MY SENSES I WAS STILL LASHED TO THE POST . . . . .	" 217
THE WEAPON WAS JUST IN MY HAND WHEN THE OFFICER TURNED AND FOUND HIMSELF FACING HIS OWN REVOLVER . . . . .	" 224

## ILLUSTRATIONS

CAPTAIN PANUNSEV MADE A SPEECH TELLING THE MEN OF MY EXPERIENCES AND ANNOUNCED THAT I WAS TO BE PRESENTED FOR A SECOND WAR CROSS OF ST. GEORGE . . . . .	<i>Page</i>	235
I LEAPED IN FRONT OF THE RIFLES AND ORDERED THE MEN WHO WERE ADVANCING TOWARD THE DOOR TO STOP AND THROW UP THEIR HANDS . . . . .	"	239
A PATROL OF MOUNTED POLICE CAME GALLOPING DOWN THE STREET AND FIRED A VOLLEY OF SHOTS POINT- BLANK INTO A CROWD ON A CORNER . . . . .	"	257
"YOU CALL ME A ROBBER, YOU RUSSIAN DOG!" HE SHOUTED, JUMPING AT ME AND SEIZING ME BY THE THROAT . . . . .	"	293
"HE SEEMS TO WANT TO BLEED THE RED CROSS, THAT'S ALL—IS THAT A CRIME IN THIS COUNTRY?" . . .	"	298
"COURAGE AND BRAVERY WON'T WIN A WAR WITHOUT AMMUNITION TO BACK THEM UP," I DECLARED . . .	"	323

## PUBLISHERS' NOTE

WHEN Paul Iogolevitch was working on the manuscript presented in these pages he dined one evening with Mr. Godfrey M. Lebhar, of New York, who was helping him to put the book into shape for publication.

Paul didn't take any dessert.

Some evenings later, when the two were again dining together, Paul again declined dessert.

The idea of a boy consistently "passing up" dessert was unusual enough to prompt a question as to the reason.

"I have not eaten sweetness since I was seven years old," the Russian boy explained, in his peculiar phraseology. "I was so fond of sweetness then that I thought it would be a good thing not to eat it. It taught me to say 'No' when I was strongly tempted to say 'Yes.' After a year or two I lost all desire for sweetness, and now I never eat it."

The incident, unimportant in itself, is interesting because it reveals a phase of the boy's character which explains better than any other single factor how it was possible for him to have accomplished more at the age of seventeen than most of us even dream of achieving in a lifetime. The strength of will which he developed as a mere boy carried him

## PUBLISHERS' NOTE

safely over obstacles which would have stopped most of us.

When the Great War broke out Paul was well started on a musical career which promised to put him in the front rank of modern violinists. For the sake of an ideal—to prove that a Russian boy of the Jewish faith was not afraid to fight for his country—Paul promptly decided to abandon his musical career and fight for Russia. Because of his youth and other handicaps he had a hard time getting into the army, but his determination and persistence won the day for him. The boy violinist became the boy cavalryman. During the two strenuous years which followed, his will-power and devotion to an ideal carried him triumphantly through many a hair-raising adventure.

When the war was over so far as Russia was concerned Paul made his way to America, where he hoped to continue his fight for the Allied cause. Despite his military record, there was no place for him in our army. He was too young.

Then some one told him that he could render greater service as a speaker in the campaign which the United States Shipping Board was waging to speed up war work, but Paul could speak hardly a word of English.

He started at once to master the English language and within two or three months had made such progress that he was able to address rough-and-ready American working-men in their native tongue. His success as an orator was so pronounced that he was sent all over the country to arouse the patriotism of war workers.

## PUBLISHERS' NOTE

When the armistice was signed and his wartime activities were over, the obvious thing for Paul to have done would have been to have resumed his musical career, but Paul had another vision.

"I believe that Russia and America are the two greatest countries in the world," he declared, "and I have decided to devote the rest of my life to bringing them closer together. I love my music, but I love my Russia more!"

He at once obtained a position in the Foreign Department of one of America's most important banking institutions, and to-day, at the age of seventeen, he is in the Far East, engaged in establishing a branch bank for the organization he represents.

In presenting the inspiring story of Paul Igolevitch—the boy violinist, the boy soldier, the boy orator, the boy patriot, and, above all, the boy idealist—the publishers wish to acknowledge the assistance of Mr. Godfrey M. Lebhar, who helped him to prepare his manuscript for publication.



THE YOUNG RUSSIAN  
CORPORAL



# THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

## I

### WHO SAID SLACKER?

WHEN the Great War broke out, the idea that I might play an active part in it never occurred to me. At any rate, if it did I certainly never gave it a moment's serious consideration.

In the first place, I was only a boy. Secondly, I had a watchful father and a doting mother. Thirdly, and perhaps principally, I had a *career*.

Somebody had discovered when I was about four years old that I had some musical talent, and my family had promptly decided that one more name—a very long and unwieldy name—was to be added to the long list of great musicians that Russia had produced.

From that time on, everything I had done,

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

every plan I had made, every step I had taken—almost every breath I had breathed—had been based upon the one thought that one day I was to be the world's greatest violinist!

Thus, when I was eight years old, in order that I might enter the Imperial Conservatoire at St. Petersburg, my family had moved all the way from Harbin, Manchuria, a distance of nearly six thousand miles! We had been living at Harbin since the Russo-Japanese War, when my father, who was a doctor in the Russian army, was stationed in that vicinity. I had played before the great Prof. Leopold Auer, at the Conservatoire, and had impressed him to such an extent that I had been admitted as a student under the special care of his assistant, Professor Nalbandian.

Certainly I did not imagine that a little thing like the war would be allowed to interfere with the program that I had been following so religiously ever since my infancy. Indeed, if any one had asked me, I should have said that about the last boy in all the world to be affected by a universal call to arms would be Paul Logolevitch.

It required only about four weeks after the Russian mobilization, however, to demonstrate that whether or not I might ever turn out to be the world's greatest violinist, no one could ever deny me the title of the world's poorest guesser.

## WHO SAID SLACKER?

The Russian mobilization began July 31, 1914. On that day I was still at a small place in Finland where I had been spending my summer vacation. I started for St. Petersburg at once, and three days after I got back my father left for the front, having been given a commission as major in the medical corps of the Twenty-fifth Tverskaia Drudgina, an infantry regiment stationed near Warsaw.

The new term at the Conservatoire didn't begin until August 20th. Most of the students lived out of town and had not yet come to St. Petersburg, but some, of course, lived in the city. One of the latter was Sammy Finkel. Outside of myself, he was perhaps the youngest of the three thousand students at the Conservatoire, and that fact had made us close chums. I met him on the Nevsky Prospect—the Broadway of St. Petersburg—the day after I got to town.

"Well, Sammy," I said, after we had exchanged vacation experiences, "in a week or two now, I suppose, we'll be hard at it again, eh?"

"Not me, Paul!" he replied, very positively. "I don't mind telling you that the Conservatoire has seen the last of me. I'm going to enlist!"

"Enlist!" I repeated, amazedly. "Why, you're only fifteen! You couldn't if you wanted to. They won't take you, and, besides—"

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

"That's all right, Paul," interrupted Sammy. "I'll find a way. Did you see in the papers where the government doesn't expect much help from the Jews? Did you read where it said the Jews are *slackers*, Paul—that we are refusing to fight for Russia, and—"

"That's a lie, Sammy!" I retorted. "My father didn't hesitate a moment, my cousins, too, have volunteered, and I know lots of other fellows who—"

"Well, you'll know one more before the week is out!" And Sammy left me, with a look of determination on his face that was quite unmistakable.

As I turned back home I could not help thinking of Sammy's words: "The Jews are slackers"—"refusing to fight for Russia."

I knew, of course, that Russia had treated our people shamefully in the past—although, because of my father's education and professional position, our own family had always enjoyed privileges which were denied others of our race—but surely this was no time to throw our grievances in Russia's face. Refusing to fight for Russia!

As for myself, I loved Russia with all the patriotic ardor that a boy can feel for his country. I had seen much more of it than the average Russian boy—more of it than the average American boy sees of the United States—and Russia is nearly three times as big. I

## WHO SAID SLACKER?

had lived in central Siberia—at Verchne Udinsk, on Lake Baikal, where I was born; in the Far East, at Harbin, Manchuria; and in the capital city of St. Petersburg. Besides that, however, there was hardly a section of the country—north, south, east, or west—that I had not visited in connection with my concert work. I started to play at concerts when I was nine, had been on a concert tour all through Russia and Siberia before I was eleven, and at twelve I had played in all the capitals of Europe.

The more I had seen of other countries and peoples the more I had come to love my own. I loved Russia's mighty rivers, her endless forests, her fertile plains, her teeming mines, her bounding orchards, her gushing oil-fields, and her lofty mountains, and I loved the Russian people, whose hearts are as big as their country and whose minds are as simple and as guileless as their winter snows. I knew that in some respects Russia was far behind some of the other countries I had visited, but I loved her just as she was. Refuse to fight for Russia!

That night and the following day I read the newspapers closely. Sure enough, I ran across a paragraph here and an editorial there which pointedly questioned the patriotism of Russian Jews, just as Sammy had said, and it made the blood rush to my cheeks to read it.

I decided to call on Sammy and talk it all

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

over with him. On my way, I passed a *sborni punct*—a mobilization center. There was quite a crowd of men and women gathered outside, and in the center of one little group was a Russian cavalryman in full uniform.

He was a big, blond, intelligent-looking fellow, and, while only a private, he was not of the usual *muzhik*, or peasant, type. I could not help thinking what a bad time Germany was going to have if our army of eight million men included many like this powerful trooper.

"Lucky for Russia she doesn't depend upon the Jews to defend her!" he was saying as I approached. "I can tell you the Huns would be in St. Petersburg by this time if we had to depend on those slackers!"

"You're right, soldier, you're quite right!" agreed a big, hulking fellow in civilian clothes who had stood with open mouth, listening to the speaker, and who now took off his cap and waved it.

"It's a wonder you wouldn't do some fighting yourself!" I cried, stepping up to him and then, as he turned and swung at me, darting quickly out of his reach.

This incident only served to emphasize what the newspapers were printing. It might not be *true* that the Jews were shirking their duty, but, at any rate, everybody seemed to think it was, and that was bad enough.

## WHO SAID SLACKER?

I talked the matter over with my brother Boris. He was two years older than I, and he had a pretty level head.

"I wouldn't worry about it at all, Paul," he said, reassuringly. "We're too young to get into this, anyway, and, besides, what do we care what the *papers* say? Haven't they always attacked us? If it isn't one thing it's another, and now, of course, it is only natural that they should cast slurs at our patriotism. Forget it!"

I *couldn't* forget it. During the days that followed I thought of it more and more. When I went out I overheard conversations among people in the streets and between passengers in the street-cars, and when I stayed home I read the same false insinuations in the papers.

Then the Conservatoire opened and I went to report. Every one was talking about the war. Reports of the successful invasion of East Prussia by our troops had come in and filled us all with enthusiasm. Many of our students didn't show up. Others came in uniform—just to say good-by before joining their regiments. Still others were planning to leave within a week or two.

Never in the course of my musical studies had I made a worse showing than I did those first few days of the term. No matter how hard I tried, I just could not keep my thoughts on my work. The teachers made allowances, of course, be-

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

cause of the distraction of the times, but there were limits to their patience.

One afternoon I was playing for Professor Nalbandian. Other students were in the studio awaiting their turn, and peering through the glass partition which formed one of the walls of the room were still others who usually assembled when one of the big professors was giving instruction.

I started off all right, but soon my thoughts wandered to Sammy, who had failed to show up, and who I figured must have carried out his intention to enlist. I was just picturing him in a trench with shrapnel exploding all around him when bang! crash!—something exploded right at my elbow.

It was the professor! Without any preliminary warning, he had arisen from his chair, grabbed the music I was supposed to be reading, and thrown it angrily out of the door, the music-stand crashing to the floor at the same time.

It was just his polite way of saying to inattentive students, "If you can't follow the music on the violin, follow it on your hands and knees!"

As I stooped, shamefacedly, to pick up the scattered sheets I apologized to him, but he was too angry to notice me and beckoned for the next student to take my place at the music-

## WHO SAID SLACKER?

stand, which the accompanist had replaced. I had seen the professor act in this way with other students, but this was the first time I had given him cause to treat me in that manner, and I felt very much ashamed of myself as I made my way out of the studio.

This incident acted upon me as a dash of cold water upon the face of a fainting person. It brought me to my senses. Instantly I saw that my musical career, for the present, at any rate, was over. It was useless for me to attempt to continue my work when other things, which now seemed to me of far greater importance, were uppermost in my mind. There was only one thing for me to do, and I knew what it was.

That night, when Boris and I were getting ready for bed, I started the subject again.

"Why don't you enlist, Boris?" I asked.

"Me enlist?" he repeated. "Me? I would in a minute, and you know it, only I'm too young."

"Well, you're as old as Sammy Finkel, aren't you, and he's gone? Of course, if you *tell* them how old you are, they won't take you, but you don't have to tell them all you know. Boris, I'm going to try it myself!"

"*You, Paul!*" he answered, satirically, "why, you must be crazy! After all the time you've devoted to your musical education and everything, you're going to give it all up? You a

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

soldier! Why, Paul, if they put you on sentry-go they'd have to send some one with you to hold your hand—you're even afraid to sleep alone, and you know it!"

The latter charge was so near the truth that I had no answer to make, and I got into bed without another word. Ever since I had been an infant I had been afraid to sleep alone. In the days that were to come, during many a long and lonely vigil in the darkest of Russian nights, with German snipers all around me, I sometimes recalled this conversation with Boris—but that's getting ahead of my story.

The next morning I had a serious talk with my mother. I told her I wanted to get into the fight for Russia, and I wanted her consent.

My mother was not easily startled, but this entirely unexpected suggestion from me nearly took her off her feet. She would not give it a moment's consideration. I was entirely too young, it wasn't necessary, Russia didn't need boys, and last, but not least—my career!

I argued and coaxed and fumed. I told her I realized what a lot I would be sacrificing if I left the Conservatoire, but I felt that I would be sacrificing more if I stayed. It did no good.

"No, Pavlik," she answered, finally. "It is out of the question. You might as well give up the idea now once and for all."

"Every one is saying that the Jews are trying

## WHO SAID SLACKER?

to get out of fighting," I pointed out. "When they are called to the colors, they try to get positions that will keep them out of the firing-line. It looks—"

"Who's saying it, Pavlik? A lot of *muzhiks* who can neither read nor write, and a lot of *chinovniki* [petty officials], who think that the easiest way to earn promotion is to vent their spleen on the Jews and the peasant classes!"

"No, mother, I've heard it from others—intelligent people," and I told her of the Russian cavalryman whom I had heard speaking at the *sborni punct*. "We've got to correct that notion, mother, and the only way those of us who are not called can do it is to *volunteer*, and that's what I want to do."

"Well, I'll wire your father," she finally agreed, "but I can tell you now it will be useless."

In due course word came back that in my father's opinion I would make a far better violinist than I ever could hope to be a soldier, and that, as Russia had all the soldiers she needed, I had better stick to the Conservatoire, because the world could never have too many great violinists.

I did not let the matter rest there. Day after day I talked it all over with Boris, and at last I got him almost as enthusiastic as I was myself. One day he came into the house and told me he had a big surprise for me.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

We went up to our room.

"Paul," he whispered, "I've decided you're right. The thing for us to do is to enlist. Let's go!"

I could hardly believe my ears. At once we began our preparations. We had only a few hours, as we soon decided to take the train that very night for Warsaw—a distance of some fifteen hundred miles and a three-day journey. I shall not go into that adventure at length because I have so many more to relate that worked out more successfully. This one proved a fizzie.

Suffice it to say, we bought some uniforms, packed them into a bundle, and got away all right, and we were able to get our railway tickets without much difficulty, but after we had traveled all night the train stopped at one of the important stations, a couple of gendarmes entered, picked us out without hesitation, and, after asking us a few questions, sent us back home! We found out then that the fellow who had sold us the uniforms had afterward become scared and had called up my mother. A hasty wire to the authorities was all that had been necessary to nip our flight in the bud.

Boris decided that he was through, but I became more determined than ever, and I told my mother that if she didn't help me to get into the army somehow I would do something

## WHO SAID SLACKER?

desperate. She must have seen I was in earnest, for she wired my father again, and this time, much to my surprise, she got the following answer:

Bring Paul to me at once. We'll give him a taste of war and see how he likes it.—MAJOR IOGOLEVITCH.

I didn't know exactly how to interpret this, and my doubts were materially increased when, on the day of our departure, my mother insisted that I take my violin with me.

"What's the idea?" I protested. "Am I going to war or is it a concert tour?"

I was so glad to be on my way to Warsaw without fear of being stopped and sent home, however, that I did not press my objections, and so I went to war with my mother in one hand and my violin in the other! Little did I think then what an important part a violin might play on occasion even in actual warfare.

When we got to Warsaw my father disclosed that he had obtained permission from the Commander-in-chief of the Russian army for me to wear the uniform of a Russian soldier and to act as mounted messenger under his protection!

My joy knew no bounds, and the three days that followed, which were spent in sight-seeing in Warsaw, were all too long. They came to an end at last and my mother returned to St. Petersburg, while my father and I went on to

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

camp. On the way my father explained that the only reason he had asked me to bring my violin was that I might provide amusement for his fellow-officers, in whose company I was to spend much time.

I had to have a uniform made specially for me, as the regular army clothing issued at camp was miles too big. I was glad of it when I saw the outfit my father had ordered. It made my eyes swim.

There was a green coat, riding-breeches—with leather on the insides of the legs—high leather boots lined with fur, a white Persian-lamb fur hat, and a Sam Browne belt from which hung a Lady Browning revolver and a small sword! Besides this I was provided with a carbine, or short cavalry rifle of the regulation type.

Attired in his full uniform, the new mounted messenger of the Twenty-fifth Tverskaia Drudgina must have looked like the Czar of all the Russias himself. Of this much I'm sure—he certainly felt like it.

## II

### FIRST BLOOD

THE camp of the Twenty-fifth Tverskaia Drudgina, to which I was attached as mounted messenger, was about five miles from Warsaw. It was a regiment of infantry reserves from the town of Tver—"Drudgina" meaning "regiment," and "Tverskaia," "of Tver."

During the first week I was given very little to do—in fact, the officers refused to take me seriously, and the men, because of the position my father occupied, did not treat me as I would have preferred to be treated and as would have been more befitting the lowly rank I occupied. I was only a messenger. I didn't want to be treated like an officer.

Things were so unsatisfactory to me in this respect that I spoke to my father about it.

"If you have tried to make things easy for me, father," I said, "you haven't done me any favor. I wanted to be treated like any other soldier."

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

He insisted that no special favors had been asked for me, and when, that same afternoon, the colonel's orderly handed me a packet to be carried to the brigade headquarters at Warsaw, I felt that perhaps my misgivings had been unwarranted.

At any rate, I jumped on my horse and started off for Warsaw as proud as if I had been intrusted with a mission of life-and-death importance. Indeed, as I trotted along the much-traveled road between the camp and the city, I could not help regretting that there was no prospect of attack by hostile patrols and that I would have no chance to show how bitterly I would fight if the occasion arose. We were too far from the front for any such adventure, however, and about the only danger that could come to the packet which I had carefully placed in my inside pocket was that I might lose it, and to make sure that it was still secure I kept slapping the breast of my coat as I jogged along.

I had gone about two miles when I heard the hoofs of a horse behind me, and I slowed up a little. As the rider approached I recognized in him one of the cavalrymen attached to the regiment.

"Well, Ivanoff," I said, as he came abreast of me, "I suppose you're headed for Warsaw, too, eh?"

"Yes," he replied. "That's the idea." And

## FIRST BLOOD

then, somewhat sulkily, he added, "I'm supposed to see that no one steals you!"

I was so angry at the thought that my father had evidently felt it necessary to have me "chaperoned" that I dug my spurs into my horse's side and galloped off as fast as I could. I knew how to ride—my brother and I had each owned a pony when we were kids in Harbin—and before my "escort" had time to realize what had happened I was half a mile ahead of him. As I came to the outskirts of Warsaw, the traffic became so thick and there were so many children in the streets that I was forced to slow down and I was afraid I would be overtaken, but, fortunately, my "escort" encountered the same difficulties, and when I reached brigade headquarters I was alone.

"I have here"—indicating my breast pocket—"important papers from the Twenty-fifth Tverskaia Drudgina for his Excellence the brigadier-general," I declared, importantly, to the orderly on duty at headquarters.

The orderly happened to be only a young fellow himself, and he felt perhaps as important as I did.

"Very well, hand them over, and—"

"Hand them over, nothing," I interrupted.  
"I will hand them to his Excellence myself!"

The orderly eyed me carefully from head to foot and then from foot to head—he did not

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

have far to go in either direction—and, not seeing any particular insignia about me to indicate superior rank, became very sarcastic.

"Well, if you'll sit down a moment I'll let the general know right away that you are ready to receive him and he'll come right out!"—and he saluted me in anything but a military manner and backed himself into an adjoining room.

I had been sitting in the antechamber about five minutes when he reappeared.

"The general's very sorry that he can't come out to see you," he said, "but, you see, he's allowed to walk only a certain distance each day, and he's already covered that for to-day, but if you will be good enough to follow me he will see you inside."

I glared at him to show that I knew he was making fun of me, but followed him into the general's room.

As I entered I came sharply to attention, clicking my heels together and saluting, and then I handed the general the packet.

He tore it open, read the contents hastily, knitted his eyebrows, and then told me to wait outside again in the antechamber.

Half an hour passed, during which time the orderly could hardly keep his eyes off me and I could hardly keep my hands off him. He smiled at me so much that finally I could not help blurting out:

## FIRST BLOOD

"You seem to be having plenty of fun in here, but if you'll come outside for a minute I'll show you something funnier," and that made him laugh outright. Then I got mad and started toward him.

What might have happened to him—or to me—I don't know, for just then the door opened and the general himself came out, clad in his greatcoat, and ordered me to accompany him to his machine.

"You are going home with me, Iogolevitch," he said, "to be my guest."

I don't know who was the more surprised, I or the orderly, but as I saluted and turned to follow the general out of the room I got a glimpse of the most astounded young man I had ever seen in my life. He had been standing against a flat-top desk when the general came out, and when he heard me addressed by name and invited to the general's home he just fell forward, supporting the weight of his body on his bent fists, his lower jaw dropped, and his eyes fairly popped out of his head.

But I was almost equally amazed. How did the general know my name? Why was he taking a mere mounted messenger as a guest to his home?

I asked no questions, but my amazement increased when, at the house where the general was stopping, he introduced me on terms of

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

social equality to the rest of the party. There were about ten in all, including two very handsome young ladies, three young officers, and the host and hostess. When the general referred to me as the "rising young violinist" I assumed that he must have heard of me in connection with my concert work, and I let it go at that.

After supper I was asked to play the violin, an instrument being provided for me, and one of the young ladies accompanied me on the piano. The performance lasted until after midnight. Apart from the fact that it was necessary to keep the shades entirely drawn down so as not to let any light into the street, on account of possible air-raids, there was little to distinguish this from an ordinary gathering in peace-times.

In the morning the general directed me to return to camp.

"Is there no answer, your Excellence," I ventured, "to the papers I brought you yesterday?"

"Papers?" he repeated, vaguely. "What papers do you refer to, Iogolevitch?"

"Why, the packet from the Twenty-fifth Tverskaia Drudgina."

"Oh, that," he replied, indifferently. "That was merely a letter of introduction from your father telling me that you could play the violin and would be pleased to amuse us!"

## FIRST BLOOD

A letter of introduction! I don't know whether the general noticed my disappointment or not, but I was quite sure my father should know the state of my feelings when I saw him.

"If I thought I got into the army just to amuse the officers," I declared, angrily, when I saw my father, "I would get out of it just as soon as I could. That wasn't what I gave up my career for! I want to do *real* army work, and if I am not going to be allowed to, the sooner I know it the better!"

My father assured me that more important work lay ahead of me and cautioned me not to be too impatient.

From that time on I did receive more important assignments, the officers beginning to send me on errands of a military character as soon as I learned my way about.

This continued for about two months, and then our regiment and the hospital force were ordered nearer to the front lines.

I don't think I slept a wink the night before we were to start—I was so excited at the prospect of getting into action. We started early in the morning, about three o'clock. It was pitch-dark when we took the road. By this time I had been detailed as personal messenger to Colonel Yannaw, the commander of the regiment, and I rode right behind him at the

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

head of our entire regiment. The hospital unit, with which my father was connected, brought up the rear.

It was very cold, but I didn't notice it at first. I didn't even notice that we got no breakfast. As the hours wore on, however, hunger, fatigue, and cold formed a combination which began to make itself felt. I heard an occasional complaint among the men, but I was determined to let none escape me. After all, one has to expect privations in the army, I argued to myself, and up to that time I had known none. Mine were to come in full measure later.

At last, early in the afternoon we received orders to rest, get out our kitchen, and eat dinner. Never before had *borsch* (Russian soup) tasted so good to me, and the *kasha* (corn-meal), the black bread, and the veal were all infinitely better than any *kasha*, black bread, or veal I had tasted in all my life before.

We soon resumed the march, and with our stomachs well lined we were in much brighter spirits, although, if a foreigner had heard us singing as we swung along the snow-bound roads, he would never have guessed how light-hearted we really felt, because the songs the Russian soldiers sing have the most mournful airs imaginable and the words are seldom more than childish nonsense.

## FIRST BLOOD

What, for instance, could be more ridiculous than such lines as these:

Three hamlets, two villages,  
Eight girls, I only,  
Where the girls go, there go I,  
Girls in the woods, I go with them,  
Girls out of the woods, I go with them,  
We converse.

And yet there was no military song which was heard more frequently wherever Russian soldiers congregated.

But there was another song, which we never got tired of singing, and which had more, perhaps, to commend it. It was "Stenka Reizin." It told the story of Stenka Reizin, the Russian Robin Hood, a Don Cossack brigand of days gone by who had robbed the rich to feed the poor and whose memory, for that reason, had ever since been cherished by the down-trodden *muzhiks*.

As the song goes, Stenka went on a marauding exploit down the river Volga, and among the loot he brought back with him was a beautiful Persian princess. His prize aroused more jealousy than enthusiasm among his savage followers. In fact, they soon showed very clearly that they didn't intend to play second fiddle to their leader's beautiful captive.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

Black looks and ugly mutterings greeted Stenka's command:

"Why are you devils so downhearted?  
Dance, thou joker, Filka, dance!  
Come now, brothers, sing your loudest  
To her beauty, sing and prance!"

There is no response. The Don Cossack leader smells mutiny. A look of dismay comes over his features and he decides that his revelry has gone far enough. To retain the loyalty of his followers he resolves to sacrifice his prize, and he seizes his Persian beauty and throws her bodily into the river!

"Volga, Volga, native mother,  
Volga, Volga, Russian river,  
Swallow now this living present  
From a liberal Cossack giver!"

And so we marched along, singing, until we came to Ulinec. There I was directed by the colonel to find quarters for the staff, which I did after considerable difficulty, an old racing-stable formerly maintained by the Russian banker Berson being requisitioned for the purpose.

We had been at Ulinec about a week when I was ordered by the colonel to get a rifle and two hundred bullets from the quartermaster

## FIRST BLOOD

and be ready at three o'clock to start on a journey. At the appointed time I reported at the colonel's quarters, leading his horse by the reins. He appeared promptly and ordered me to follow him. We rode for an hour through the forest, the colonel continually consulting a map and telling me to watch our course carefully, as it would be necessary for me the next day to guide one of the companies of our regiment over the same route.

We finally came to a clearing, where we left our horses and went walking around the hills, going through various openings in barbed-wire fences. The place seemed to me to be entirely uninhabited, but the colonel explained to me that right behind the fences were our reserve trenches, and, sure enough, as I approached near enough to see, what appeared to be a dead plain was veritably alive with men. There were hundreds of them quartered in the trenches.

"The men here are not wasting their time, as you may think," the colonel pointed out. "The more time our men can spend here the more valuable this reserve line becomes, because the whole terrain in front of us is laid out like a checker-board and every day's calculations and gun-practice enable us more effectively to control each particular square."

On the way back to Ulinec I made a second effort to observe the landmarks, and the next

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

day, when I was given a map and told to conduct one of our detachments, under a young officer, to the reserve trenches, I felt sure, absolutely sure, that I knew the way.

It wasn't until we had been traveling about twice as long as the march ought to have taken that I realized that we were lost!

"Give me that map," the officer demanded, angrily, seeing my confusion. "We're about two hours late already. You'll have us back in Warsaw if we leave it to you much longer!"

I had no answer and handed the map over to the officer. After studying it for several minutes and starting off once or twice in the wrong direction, we finally struck the right path and eventually landed at our destination—about five hours late!

For the delay caused by my misdirection I was severely reprimanded by the commander in charge of the reserve trenches. For the next few days, every hour I had to myself I spent in the saddle familiarizing myself with the roads, determined that no such misfortune should ever occur again if I could help it.

As I became more familiar with the map, I was again intrusted with missions to the reserve trenches, and soon I was attached to the trench command as messenger.

I lived in the trenches for about a month. The experience was a valuable one. While it

## FIRST BLOOD

was well beyond the danger zone, it gave me a taste of military life in the open and hardened me considerably.

It was bitterly cold down there in the officers' dugout where I was quartered. There was no door to the place, and the fire we built made little impression on the cold winds that invaded our quarters. The place was lined with fir-tree branches and it had a wonderfully pleasant aroma, but it certainly was cold.

German airplanes flew over us almost daily, and that gave me a chance to practise pistol- and carbine-shooting, although in most cases the Hun machines were far beyond the range of my weapons. Outside of an occasional shell from a German long-range gun, little occurred during the next four weeks to disturb the regular routine into which my life had fallen.

Then came word that the Germans were making a second big drive on Warsaw, and our medical unit was ordered to the front lines, where it was badly needed. My father did not want to leave me at Ulinec, and he was less inclined to take me with him, and so he suggested that I be transferred to Warsaw. I refused to go.

"Here is a real opportunity for me to serve," I complained, "and you want me to quit! I know the roads now: I might be a real help to your contingent on its way to the front. I want to go with you!"

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

After considerable argument, that was the way it was arranged. My father asked the colonel to transfer me to the medical unit as my father's body-guard and guide, and his request was granted.

We started in a motor-car for Blonie and arrived there without incident. From there our plan was to make Sochaczef, on the Bzura River. We had not gone far, however, when we encountered increasing numbers of retiring Russian soldiers and transports. The roads became so congested that we could make little headway. Suddenly German shrapnel began to burst above us and we realized that the enemy was nearer than we had imagined. A big grenade struck fifty yards from our car, and the thin black column of smoke that rose from the ground looked like a geyser.

It was no fun. Sitting in a slow-moving motor-car with shrapnel bursting all around you has little to commend it. I was scared stiff, but I kept my mouth shut and tried not to show how scared I really was.

"I thought our troops were still in possession of Sochaczef," our chauffeur declared to one of the soldiers who was passing our car. "That's eighteen miles from here, isn't it?"

"Yes," was the answer, "but we were told to evacuate it, and if you don't turn back you'll pretty quick find out why!"

## FIRST BLOOD

According to another soldier we hailed, our troops were still in possession of Sochaczef, and he was at a loss to account for the shrapnel and the retreating soldiers.

We decided to proceed until we could get an intelligent idea of the exact situation, but we had gone only about five miles more when the fire became so intense that we instructed the chauffeur to turn back without further delay. In trying to turn the car he got stuck in the ditch, and while he was struggling with his steering-wheel a shell burst right above us and showered us with pieces of steel.

I turned quickly to see whether my father had been hit, and then I saw one of the physicians who had been sitting in the back of the car throw up his hands and fall forward, his head covered with blood. The physician next to him was also wounded, his right arm having been almost severed at the elbow by a piece of flying shell. My father was apparently untouched, but suffered from the shock.

As for myself, I was untouched, I thought. My left hand was clutched in the hand of the chauffeur, who had grasped it with his wheel, and his grip was so tight that my wrist was bleeding. Then I became aware of a sharp pain in my shoulder, and, tearing open my coat to examine it, a piece of shrapnel which had penetrated the flesh just above the collar-bone

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

fell to the floor of the car. It was not a very deep wound, but was bleeding freely. I closed my coat quickly, as I did not want to alarm my father.

My father and the chauffeur seemed to be stunned. I shouted at them, and, the German shelling abating for a moment, I finally made myself heard and brought them to. We decided to abandon the car and, summoning help, lifted out the wounded doctors and carried them to a Red Cross ambulance which was trying to worm its way through the retiring soldiers.

Then I suggested that my father, the chauffeur, and I try to make our way through the woods and thereby get more quickly out of range of the German shells which were again beginning to burst all around us.

For five miles we continued through the woods in the direction of Warsaw. All the time I was trying to conceal my wound from my father. The blood had oozed through my coat and was freezing on me, and when my father finally noticed it I said it came from the wounded doctors.

Suddenly I heard rifle-shots, and almost simultaneously two Russian cavalrymen darted by us and told us to hide as quickly as we could.

"There's a German cavalry patrol not a mile behind us!" they shouted.

Before we could make up our minds what to do the Germans were upon us.

## FIRST BLOOD

In my hand was my father's revolver. The leading German was not twenty feet from us and had raised his saber, when bang! bang! I had fired two shots in quick succession. I saw the horse rear high in the air, and then the Hun threw up his hands convulsively. The next moment his body was hanging lifeless from the saddle.

Almost simultaneously the chauffeur started blazing away, and the second and third men fell. I fired the remaining shots in my gun, but I don't know what at—the German patrol was gone! All that was left was a prancing horse, striving frantically to free itself from the reins which had become entangled around its legs and were still held in the deathly grip of its former rider, and two other Germans who lay quite still among the trees, their horses having freed themselves and galloped away.

The whole thing happened so quickly that I had not had a real chance to get frightened, but my father clasped me to his breast and said some nice things to me, and then he shook the chauffeur's hand and told him that his presence of mind would be promptly reported to the commander of the outfit.

Finally we got on to the main road again, and the soldiers we met informed us that the German drive had been definitely stopped.

When we got back to Ulinec I had one of the





SAW THE HORSE REAR HIGH IN THE AIR, AND THEN THE  
HUN THREW UP HIS HANDS CONVULSIVELY

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

men fix up my shoulder, and I turned in as soon as I could get away from the rest of the fellows, who made me tell over and over again all about the fight we had had.

In the morning my shoulder had swollen so much that my shirt wouldn't close, and I could conceal my wound no longer. My father was summoned and examined it and then he painted it all around with iodine, which made it smart unbearably. I bit my lips, determined not to utter a whimper, and perhaps I was helped in that by a recollection which came to me then of an incident I had witnessed at a military post at Handow-hadze, near Harbin, where, as a kid of seven, I had been taken by my father, who had to inspect the medical department there.

I was hanging around the place, waiting for my father to get through with a group of officers who were all going over some records, when I noticed a soldier walk in and stand outside the group.

His coat was thrown over his shoulders, his face was haggard, and I noticed blood on his boots, but he did not seem to be injured.

He must have stood patiently there for a minute and a half before my father happened to turn around and, noticing him, asked him what it was he wanted.

For an answer he threw off the coat which enveloped his shoulders and laid down on the

## FIRST BLOOD

table in front of the doctors his severed left arm! It had been cut off just below the elbow by a train, he explained. He had stopped the flow of blood by binding his belt around the arm. Despite all the anguish he must have been suffering and the shock his system must have sustained, he had calmly and quietly wandered into the doctor's office and waited patiently with his uncanny burden until my father had happened to give him attention!

What was my suffering compared with that? I asked myself, and it made it easier for me to bear the pain.

Nevertheless, I was sent to the hospital and they kept me there a week, and then I received the unwelcome tidings that I was to be sent home! There was no use rebelling this time. My father pointed out that he himself had been put temporarily on the reserve list on account of the shell-shock he had sustained, and as the order under which I had been admitted into the army provided specifically that I could serve only with my father, there was nothing more to be done. Before I left the colonel shook my hand and told me that he was presenting my name for a decoration for bravery and self-control.

The next day we started for Warsaw. We stayed there two days. Before we left I received a paper stating that I had been pro-

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

moted to the rank of corporal and that I was honorably discharged from the army on account of my wound.

This was the beginning of February, 1915. I had been in the army less than six months.

As we traveled back to Petrograd, my father and I, I wondered whether the sacrifice I had made in giving up my musical career had really been worth while. What had I accomplished for Russia? How had my humble participation in the war helped in even the slightest degree to remove the slurs which had been cast at Jewish patriotism?

A copy of a Petrograd newspaper which the newsboys brought into the train at Vilna gave me the answer.

There, on the front page, was my picture, and, above it, glaring head-lines declared:

RUSSIA'S YOUNGEST HERO A JEW!

### III

#### A LEAP IN THE DARK

IT took us three days to get back to Petrograd. In those early days of the war wounded soldiers returned from the front were more or less a novelty, and the welcome my father and I received upon our arrival home was so vigorous that it took us off our feet. I attended more parties, lunches, dinners, and receptions that first week after our return than I had been to in any six months before. I began to think that I was about the most important boy in Petrograd, and what tickled my vanity more than anything else, I suppose, was the fact that the girls I knew seemed to think a whole lot more of me in uniform than they ever did when I was just "the boy violinist."

As soon as I could get away from my family long enough I spent a day at the Conservatoire visiting my professors and former fellow-students.

As I was leaving I ran into a fellow named Gavril Kapustin, and we got talking about some

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

of the boys who had gone to the front. Gavril himself was so near-sighted that he was quite ineligible, or I am sure he would have been one of the first to have volunteered.

"Has any one heard from Sammy Finkel?" I asked.

"Why, you can hear from him yourself, if you want to, Paul. He's here."

"Here!" I repeated. "What on earth is he doing at the Conservatoire? Did he lose his nerve?"

"No! No! He's over there!" Gavril replied, sadly, pointing in the direction of the Conservatoire infirmary. "Lose his nerve! I should say not! He was one of the bravest in his regiment. They say he feared nothing, and several times risked his life in No Man's Land in efforts to save his comrades. One night, while on duty in the trenches, his feet were so badly frost-bitten that they had to be amputated—and so you'll find him over there"—again pointing to the infirmary. "He will be glad to see you, Paul."

I lost no time in getting across the campus to the infirmary, but there they told me that Sammy was wheeling himself around the park in a wheel-chair, and after wandering around a bit I met him. Poor, poor fellow! The tears came to my eyes and a big lump came up in my throat as I recognized him coming toward me. He

## A LEAP IN THE DARK

looked very pale and run-down and that made his black eyes flash even more brightly than they were accustomed to do. On his breast was a medal.

I couldn't say a word, but Sammy was less affected.

"Hello, Paul!" he greeted, cheerily. "What brings you back?" And then we went fully into all the experiences we had had, and Sammy's story made all my adventures seem like child's play.

"You're a lucky fellow, Paul," he declared, as I wheeled him back to the infirmary; "you've got another chance. I'm all through!"

"But my father insists that I have had enough of fighting and—"

"Don't you believe it!" interrupted Sammy, turning around in his chair and shaking his finger in front of his face vehemently as he spoke; "no one has had enough of fighting in a time like this as long as he is still able to fight some more. As long as a fellow can fight and his country needs him and everything, I think he ought to drop everything else and fight! I just wish I could go back, that's all!"

I promised to see Sammy again very soon, which I did. In the mean while, my father was ordered to Vitebsk, as head of the medical examining board there, but before he went he advised me to give up any notion I might have

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

of getting back into the army and to go back to the Conservatoire instead.

Within a week or two I received through the provost-marshall in Petrograd a medal which had been awarded me by the Empress of Russia. It hung on a ribbon of orange and black, the colors of the Order of St. George, and it bore the inscription, "For Bravery."

Following my father's advice, although it was much against my personal inclination, I discarded my uniform, donned civilian clothes, and went back to the Conservatoire. My civil life lasted, however, only a few weeks.

In April came word that the Russian forces were suffering reverses. After our tremendous successes in Galicia, our capture of the fortress of Przemysl, our victorious campaign in the Carpathians, and our second invasion of East Prussia, the Hun lines had stiffened, superior leadership and strategy had outgeneraled us, and now the Huns were sweeping our armies before them as easily as we had dispersed theirs.

Again the newspapers began to belittle the part the Jews were playing in the war. Indeed, some of them went so far as to say that the reverses our armies were suffering were due to the treachery of Jews in the ranks who were betraying their comrades.

It did not take me very long this time to make up my mind where my duty lay. My

## A LEAP IN THE DARK

mother knew what was in my mind, but she would do nothing to help me get into the army again, and so I decided to try it on my own account. My former experience, my medal, and the fact that I now ranked as a corporal were factors in my favor, but my age and the fact that I had been discharged from the army were against me.

At the Warsaw station in Petrograd, from which the troop-trains left for the front, I found it almost impossible to make any headway—having neither a uniform nor special permission to cross the tracks.

As I hung around the tracks, wondering how I could possibly get aboard one of the trains, I was approached by an officer.

"Which track does troop-train No. 5 leave from?" he demanded, as I greeted him.

"Why, that is the train that I am going on," I replied, quickly recognizing my opportunity. "I'm sure it leaves from one of the left tracks. Will the officer accompany me?"

He indicated his consent, and with him at my side it was a simple matter to get by the gendarmes.

When we got over to the set of tracks on the left I pointed out a train several tracks away and told him that that was track No. 5, and as he left me I jumped aboard a freight-car attached to a train which was just starting on my right.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

In the car were several cavalrymen, eight horses, and a lot of saddles and hay. I explained my plight to the soldiers, showed them my medal, and pleaded with them to let me ride in the car with them. They promptly assured me that they had not the slightest objection, and invited me to join them in the tea and bread which they had just prepared, which I did.

We were soon all very good friends, and when we were approaching our first stopping-place the men advised me to jump into the hay and cover myself up, in case the car should be entered by any of the authorities. Transportation room was so valuable at that time that every precaution was taken to prevent unauthorized people from "stealing" a ride—even in a freight-car.

All day long we traveled without incident, but the following morning a gendarme entered our car and made a rather careful survey of the individuals in it, and the nearer we approached Vilna the more frequent these inspections became. The co-operation of the soldiers invariably did the trick for me, however. In fact, they got so proficient in concealing me that the inspections gave me no concern. As we approached an important station I would jump into the hay and the soldiers would cover me with saddles, and so I would remain until the train was well on its way again.

## A LEAP IN THE DARK

At Vilna, however, instead of a gendarme, an officer entered the car and behind him was the general of the whole division! Instantly the men jumped to attention, while I remained, as motionless as I could, on the floor of the car, beneath a pile of hay and saddles.

"We're searching for a boy wearing a medal and answering to the name of Paul Iogolevitch!" the officer stated quickly, glancing at a telegram he had in his hand. I could see him through my camouflage. "Have any of you men seen him?"

It seemed like an hour before their answer came, and then almost as one man they answered, "No, sir, we have seen no such boy during the whole trip from Petrograd!"

I breathed such a sigh of relief that some of the saddles on top of me shifted and I was afraid for a moment the whole collection would come toppling to the floor and attract the officers' attention.

"This boy is missing from his home. The local authorities inform us that he boarded this very train. If any of you men know anything about it and are trying to shield him, I warn you now that you will be court-martialed and it will go hard with you if you don't give me the facts now!"

There was no answer, and the officers turned to leave. At the door they stopped, and once again the officer spoke:

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

"I'll give you men one more warning. If any of you have seen this boy, speak up now or suffer the consequences!"

My mind had been working very quickly. If the men stuck to their story in order to save me, and I was discovered afterward despite their loyalty, they would be most severely punished. If, on the other hand, I were to give myself up now and declare that the men knew nothing of my presence in the car, while my whole plan would be shattered, these big-hearted *muzhiks* would not suffer for their kindness to me.

Breaking through the load of saddlery, I jumped to my feet and came to attention before the astonished and angry officers.

"Who are you?" the junior officer demanded, angrily. "And what were you doing under that hay?" If I had been a German spy caught red-handed in an attempt to blow up the Czar's palace, instead of just a Russian boy trying hard to break into the army, the general could not have glared at me more threateningly.

"I am Paul Iogolevitch, your Excellence!" I answered, meekly, addressing the general. "I have been hiding in the far corner of the car behind the horses for two days: these men knew no more about my being there than did your Excellence."

"Never mind these men. Their case will be attended to later. Why didn't you come out in

## A LEAP IN THE DARK

the first place when you heard your name mentioned? Iogolevitch, you are under arrest!" And he turned toward the door of the car, called a soldier, and directed him to take me to the gendarmerie. I was marched off without a chance to say good-by to the men who had done their best to help me or to say a word in their defense if they were indeed haled before a court martial, and I felt very badly about it.

I was kept under guard all day, being taken to a near-by restaurant for meals, and when night came I was taken aboard a train that was leaving for Petrograd. In the baggage-car to which I was consigned were four baggagemen besides the gendarme who had me in charge.

It did not take me long to make friends with the baggagemen, and I believe the gendarme himself felt sorry for me when he heard what my offense consisted of. The medal I wore had led them to ask me questions, and when I told them how my desire to get back to the fighting-line had been frustrated by a lot of foolish gendarmes who had evidently received notice that I was missing from home and felt that it was necessary to send me back at all costs despite the object I had in mind, they all expressed their complete sympathy with me. When the gendarme's back was turned the baggagemen promised that if the opportunity came they would assist me to get away.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

I had not really thought of trying to escape, but it was so hot in the car from the steam heat that the door had been left open, and it would not have been a very difficult matter to have gotten out. As we approached a station or slowed down the gendarme was alert enough to station himself at the door, although I don't believe he imagined I had any idea of escaping.

We had been rumbling along for about an hour when it suddenly occurred to me that if I was going to escape, the sooner I accomplished it the better it would be for me, because the farther we got away from Vilna the greater the distance I would have to travel in my effort to get to the front.

Telling the baggagemen that I was going to take a nap, I went over to one of the corners of the car and lay down. I had been lying there only a few minutes when I overheard a spirited argument going on between the men and the gendarme over some unimportant subject, and I got the idea that they were merely trying to divert his attention from me to give me an opportunity to escape—if that were my intention.

Carefully I edged my way to the open door. The train was going not more than fifteen miles an hour, but outside it was pitch-dark and I had not the slightest idea what I might jump into if ever I could get up the courage to make the leap.

## A LEAP IN THE DARK

I got to within three feet of the door without attracting the gendarme's attention. The train did not seem to be going particularly fast, the gendarme was not paying the slightest attention to me, thinking, no doubt, that I had fallen asleep, the open door beckoned to me, and without a moment's further hesitation I got to my knees, crawled to the door, stood erect for a brief second, and jumped out into the darkness!

## IV

### I CAPTURE A GENERAL

AS soon as my feet touched the ground it seemed to jump up and hit me in the head. Over and over again I rolled and I did not seem to be able to stop myself, and then I landed plump up against a fence. If that fence hadn't been there, I think I would have been rolling still.

For a moment or two I lay still. I was afraid even to try to move my arms or legs, for fear of finding that I had been badly injured. When I finally did take an inventory of myself I found that all I had was a sprained ankle, a fine collection of bruises and scratches, and a deep-rooted grievance against the man who selected the stones for that road-bed. He must have spent a lifetime picking out the ones with the sharpest edges.

I decided to get away from the track as fast as I could, feeling that as soon as the gendarme discovered my escape he would give the alarm and, perhaps, have the train stopped to search

## I CAPTURE A GENERAL

for me. About a mile away I could see some lights, and I limped my way toward them.

At the first little hut I came to, an old woman opened the door after I had knocked several times.

"What do you want, you little devil?" she demanded, angrily, as she held up a candle and got a glimpse of perhaps the most disreputable-looking young man her eyes had ever beheld. I was cut and scratched and covered with dirt and gravel.

"I want to come in and clean myself. I had a bad fall. And then I want to get to Vilna," I replied, showing her a ruble.

"Vilna! It is twenty-five miles from here. You can come in, but you will have to take the train to Vilna," and then she called out a name and an old man, evidently her husband, came clattering through from a rear room, where he had been sleeping.

When I was cleaned up as well as their primitive facilities made possible I succeeded, after much argument, in getting the old man to wake up one of his neighbors, who had a horse and wagon, and bargained with him to make the trip at once.

We drove all night. It was eight o'clock when we reached the city the next morning. The cost of the trip left me with but a few dollars. I bought breakfast at a cheap restaurant, and

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

then I went over to the station where the troop-trains were going out.

There were hundreds of freight-cars loaded with ammunition, food, and troops standing along the reserve tracks, waiting for their turn to come to start for the front. One train seemed just about to start, and to a group of cavalrymen who were squatting on the floor of one of the cars I told my story as briefly as I could.

They grasped the situation quickly and then they grasped *me* by the hands and pulled me up to them. They were just as sympathetic as my former traveling companions had been—I wondered if all cavalrymen were so big-hearted—and they told me to go over to one corner of the car and make myself at home—with the horses.

It was nearly three hours before the train finally started, and just before it got under way a young officer jumped aboard and declared that he was going to honor us with his company as far as the next station we stopped at, which he said would be about three hours later. As I was fairly covered by a pile of saddles, which seemed to grow heavier every minute, I did not relish the idea of having to remain in that condition for three hours—even for the honor of traveling with an officer—but I was afraid to reveal my presence to him, and decided to stick it out.

## I CAPTURE A GENERAL

My discomfort was increased very shortly by a restlessness which developed among the horses. They started to fight! Their hind legs began striking out in all directions. I was entirely neutral, but that didn't save me; on the contrary, I seemed to draw the fire of all the belligerents, as neutrals usually do. But for the saddles, which, of course, received the first force of the horses' blows, I should very soon have been pounded to death.

As it was I was pretty badly bruised, and on several occasions I was on the point of calling out for assistance. It was better, I figured, to be sent back alive than to continue my journey dead! But the soldiers, evidently realizing my predicament, quickly got after the restive animals and succeeded eventually in restoring amicable relations among them. An hour and a half later we stopped at a station which had possibly not entered into the officer's calculations, and he left the car. I was brought out by the soldiers and anxiously examined. I was so covered with dirt they were not quite sure at first I was the same boy they had stowed away, but when I was brushed off it was not difficult for me to establish my identity, and they were much relieved to find that I had not suffered as badly as they had feared. They gave me some tea and food, and I soon felt much better.

At Orany the soldiers disembarked and were

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

ordered to transfer their baggage and equipment to some heavy motor-lorries which were on hand for that purpose. One of the men bundled me up in an old horse blanket, tied me around with ropes, and swung me over his shoulder, depositing me, not too gently, at the side of one of the lorries. When the coast was clear he loosened the ropes and gave me a nudge to come out.

I did not wait to say good-by to my good friends, but made off as quickly as possible for the main street of the little town, which was bustling with military activity. Cavalry, artillery, and infantry, with all their paraphernalia, filled the street, and there was so much noise that I felt comparatively safe—safer than I had felt for a week.

The warm gloves I had had when I left home had disappeared, and I went into a small store to buy a pair. It was bitterly cold. The merchant seemed to be a kindly fellow and I did not hesitate to tell him my story.

“Young man,” he said, in a kindly way, “I am going to do what I can to help you. There’s a cavalry regiment in town now and I know the commander. I will see him to-day or to-morrow and I will speak to him about you.”

I thanked him a thousand times, and asked him whether I could increase my indebtedness to him to the extent of a uniform.

“Yes, yes. I’ll trust you. I’ll fix up a uni-

## I CAPTURE A GENERAL

versity student's overcoat for you. I have one in stock. Come back this afternoon and we will see what we can do."

That afternoon I returned to the store accordingly, and in very short order I came out attired in a regular student's overcoat which fitted me well and made me look so much older that I no longer had any fear that I would be rejected on account of my youth.

Two days later the merchant took me to division headquarters and presented me to the general.

"How old are you, Logolevitch?" the general asked, after I had given him a few facts regarding my former army experience.

"Eighteen, sir!" I replied, but the blush that came to my cheeks revealed at once that I was lying, and, under the sharp gaze of the officer, I could not stick to it.

"Seventeen, I should say," I stumbled.

"How old are you, Logolevitch?" he repeated, firmly, as though he had heard neither my first nor my second answer.

"Fourteen, sir," I replied, unable longer to lie; "that is, I will be fourteen in December."

Then I showed him some newspaper clippings, my discharge papers, and the paper which my father had received from the main headquarters of the Russian army granting me permission to serve as his messenger.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

"I have heard, your Excellency," I hastened to say, fearing that he was going to decide against me, "that no man who wants to serve his country will be turned down if he appeals to you. I really did not mean to lie about my age, but I wanted to get into the army so very much that—"

"I'm going to give you a chance, Iogolevitch," he replied, getting up and shaking my hand. "I'm going to write your father to get his consent, but in the mean while I will take the responsibility upon myself. If you really want to serve, we'll put you in the regimental kitchen, as the cook's assistant. How will that do?"

"I am very grateful," I replied. "I am anxious to serve in any capacity," for, although I could not see much glory in kitchen work, I had a suspicion that the general was only trying me out, and I wanted to show him that I knew that a soldier's first duty is to obey orders, and obey willingly.

My theory did not work out, however, for into the kitchen I went and there I stayed, and there was no play about the work the cook made me do, either. It had one compensation, though—in the kitchen we saw to it that we didn't get the worst of the food that we had to prepare.

The next day I was called into the general's

## I CAPTURE A GENERAL

quarters and asked for my father's address. I gave him an address of six months ago, which had since been changed. I hoped that, with the imperfect telegraph system prevailing in Russia, my father would never receive the general's message and that, in the mean time, the conditions under which I had been taken into the regiment might be forgotten.

That was another theory that didn't work out, as I discovered when, a week after I had been installed as cook's assistant, I was again summoned before the general.

"Iogolevitch," he said, "no word has come from your father. It is a week since I wired. I am afraid I shall have to let you go!"

"Will your Excellence give me two days more?" I pleaded. "Perhaps the answer will come by that time." I had no idea that the two days—or two years, for that matter—would make any difference so far as word from my father was concerned, but I figured that the delay could not possibly do me any harm, while something *might* develop that would help me out of the difficulty.

It did. The general said he would wait two days more, and I went back to my kitchen. As I sat there despondently looking out of the window and wondering if it could be half as hard to get out of the Russian army as it was to get into it, I noticed a machine stop in front of

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

the place. A lieutenant jumped out, but his saber caught in the door and he did not seem to be able to extricate it.

I ran out to help him.

"Paul!" he cried, as I approached him, "what on earth are you doing here?"

I was so surprised to be called by name by an officer whom I did not recognize that I almost forgot to salute him, but I recovered my presence of mind quickly and came to attention, and as I did so I recognized in the officer an old friend of my father's.

In a few words I told him of my experiences and my present status.

"We'll fix that for you in no time, Paul," he declared, optimistically, and then, with a smile, he added, "I know the general slightly!"

When we got to the general's quarters he walked right into the inner office without even knocking on the door, and then, to my surprise, greeted his superior familiarly as "Uncle"! For a moment or two they carried on a whispered conversation, and then I was told to go back to my quarters.

That night the lieutenant came to me with a violin he had procured, and said he had arranged to have me play in the officers' mess.

"Do your very best, Paul," he suggested. "The general's very susceptible to music, and I think you can get anything you want out of

## I CAPTURE A GENERAL

him if you win him to-night. Play the Berceuse, by Jarnfeld. If you play it as well as you did when I heard you at a concert in Petrograd, I think the general will be ready to turn the division over to you!"

"I'll be satisfied if he just keeps me in one of his regiments, lieutenant!" I answered, "and you may be sure I'll do the very best I can."

During the evening meal I was ordered to the officers' mess and invited to play. The violin was not the very best I had played on, but I played it for all I was worth, and I aimed directly at the general.

When it was all over—they kept me at it for nearly two hours—the general came toward me and shook my hand. From the expression on his face I felt that I had captured him.

"Iogolevitch," he said, "I am very much obliged to you for the entertainment you have given us. Now what would you like me to do for you?"

"Put me in one of your cavalry regiments, your Excellency," I answered. "I know of no way in which you could make me happier."

He seemed about to demur, but his nephew, the lieutenant, whispered a few words to him, and he said he would see what he could do for me in the morning, and as I left the mess-room the lieutenant came behind me and whispered:

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

"It's all right, Paul. He's going to keep you with us."

I slept little that night. I felt that my immediate purpose had been gained, and I thanked God for the talent with which He had endowed me and which was proving valuable to me in such an unexpected direction.

In the course of the few hours of sleep I did snatch I dreamed that I was in the Russian trenches in East Prussia, and when it came my turn to relieve Sammy Finkel on watch, instead of a rifle, he handed me a violin and a bow! The instrument was covered with ice, and icicles were hanging from the bow, but when I started to scrape it across the strings music came. As I played at the parapet of the trench to the accompaniment of rifle, machine-gun, and artillery fire I saw three figures suddenly arise from the Hun trenches before me and, with hands upraised, come toward me. As they reached the parapet I recognized the leader as the Kaiser, behind him was von Hindenburg, and bringing up the rear was von Mackensen!

I was so startled I dropped my bow, and the figures turned away from me. I stooped and picked up my bow and went on playing, and again they advanced toward me. I played more vigorously than before and they quickened their steps! In a moment they would be right in our trenches, and then—bang! Something

## I CAPTURE A GENERAL

had snapped. It was a board which the cook had swung across my back.

"Get up, you good-for-nothing fiddler!" he was yelling, good-naturedly. "The general's orderly is here. You are to report at headquarters at once!"

## V

### I JOIN THE "FIGHTING THIRD DRAGOONS"

WHEN I got to the general's quarters—and I didn't lose any time getting around there—he was at breakfast, but his orderly told me to go right in.

"Sit down, Iogolevitch," he invited, as he poured a cup of tea from a steaming samovar, "and tell me which of my regiments you would like to join."

There was one Cossack, one Uhlan, one Hus-sar, and one Dragoon regiment composing the division. The Russian boy has a high regard for all Russian cavalry organizations—and taking horsemen by and large the world over, I don't suppose it would be possible to find another million to equal the million serving in the Russian army in 1914—but down in his heart he feels that the Cossack is supreme. There is no trick in riding the Cossack does not know, no privation he is not willing to endure, no fight too hard for him to undertake, no odds great enough to make him waver.

## THE "FIGHTING THIRD DRAGOONS"

"I'd *like* to join the Cossacks," I answered, smiling to indicate that I realized my wish was preposterous, although I did consider myself a good rider and thought that possibly I might develop my ability in that direction sufficiently to be worthy of riding with the Cossacks.

"Very well, Iogolevitch, the Cossacks it shall be," the general answered. "Report at once to the *essaul* (the Cossack name for colonel)—Essaul Homutov, and I will telephone him in the mean while concerning you."

I hastened to the *essaul's* quarters, where my pedigree was taken down by the company clerk and I was assigned to the second *ssotnia*—meaning hundred—as the Cossack squadron is called, and turned over to the sergeant. I was still wearing my sailor-suit under the student's overcoat which I had procured from the Orany merchant, and I was anxious to don the uniform of dark-blue trousers with red stripes and khaki coat which the Cossacks were wearing.

"Where do I get my uniform?" I asked one of the men.

"Uniform? Why, in a Cossack regiment a man is supposed to supply his own uniform, his own horse and saddle, and his own saber. All the government gives us is a rifle and ammunition."

At the colonel's quarters, where I went to explain my predicament regarding a uniform and

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

equipment, the general's orderly had just delivered a package.

"The regiment has been ordered to the front at once," he confided to me. "You certainly are in luck."

It was more than half an hour before the colonel would see me, the general's message having been followed by a natural burst of activity. One officer after another was summoned before the colonel, remained closeted with him for a moment or two, came out smiling all over, and departed briskly to prepare, undoubtedly, for the move to the front which had been ordered.

"I'm sorry, Iogolevitch," the colonel replied, hastily, to my appeal for equipment, "but I really don't know what I can do for you. We have been ordered to the front! I haven't enough horses for the regiment as it is. Really, you'll have to equip yourself the best way you can and join the regiment later!"

"Have I the colonel's permission to take the matter up with the general?" I asked, not wanting to get into trouble by going over my commander's head.

"Yes, yes. Do anything you like."

At the general's quarters I ran into his nephew, the lieutenant.

"I wouldn't bother any more with that Cossack outfit," he suggested. "What's the matter with the Third Dragoons? Now I come to

## THE "FIGHTING THIRD DRAGOONS"

think of it, there are one or two fellows in that regiment, volunteers, who would make excellent chums for you. In the first company, for instance, there's Stanislav Nedzvegski, a wonderful singer, and one of the most popular men in the division. I'll speak to the general about it at once. Come back in half an hour and I'll let you know if it can be fixed."

Within two hours my transfer had been arranged, I had been accepted as a member of the Third Dragoons and assigned to the first company of the first squadron—a squadron to which, I was informed, only men who had been decorated for bravery were assigned—and half an hour later I was shaking hands with Stanislav Nedzvegski, a tall, blond cavalryman, with blue eyes and a comical expression about his mouth which revealed at once the secret of the popularity which the man seemed to enjoy.

Stanislav—they called him Stassie in the regiment—had been on a short furlough, and he started at once to tell us some of his adventures. He told them so funnily that he soon had us all convulsed in laughter, and every now and then he interpolated a rhyme or two which he improvised as he went along. He seemed to have a wonderful talent in that direction, and as he had a good singing voice he frequently burst into song, improvising the lines to familiar airs.

"And now," he declared, as he finished the

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

story of his furlough, "the next order of business, I suppose, is the initiation of Paul Iogolevitch," and then, without a moment's reflection, he sang some lines to the following effect:

"When duty calls us to the front  
We go with songs and laughter.  
We're called the 'Fighting Third Dragoons,'  
We get what we go after.

"So when you join the Third Dragoons  
Prepared to join our laughter,  
Remember, Paul, our business is  
To get what we go after!"

Perhaps the last line was a signal. At any rate, what the Dragoons *went after* just then was me, and they certainly *got* me. My feet went from under me and the next moment I was hanging head down from a beam in the ceiling. The men, about ten in number, then formed a circle and started marching around me, each one letting me know he was present by slamming me on the back as he passed. Then I was taken down and thrown around the room like a medicine-ball. Some of the men were better throwers than they were catchers, and they let me slip through their arms and land heavily on the floor.

I knew I was expected to take everything that came to me in good part, and I didn't protest

## THE "FIGHTING THIRD DRAGOONS"

or resist. They soon got tired of the man-handling they were giving me and left the hut in which the company was quartered and in which the initiation was taking place, locking the door as they went.

"Stay here till we come back for you," was Stassie's parting word. As I felt bruised all over, I was glad enough to be let alone and hoped they would forget to come back at all.

As it was, however, they were back again in perhaps twenty minutes, and then I was led to another hut some two hundred yards away. They didn't take me inside, but through the open door I could see a big fire burning. It had been built on the ground—the hut had no floor—and one of the soldiers was feeding it. Big stones were all around it.

I was ordered to undress. It was bitterly cold, and there was snow all around us, but there was nothing for me to do but comply. The blazing fire in the hut was too far away to help me; on the contrary, it only made the ground and air seem colder by contrast. It was so cold that I had to jump from foot to foot as I disrobed to keep from freezing. My Siberian blood was not unaccustomed to low temperatures, but never before had I been compelled to bare my body to the winter air in this fashion, and I shivered and shook like a half-drowned dog who has broken through the ice of a frozen pond

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

and has finally managed to struggle back to dry land. The goose-flesh stood out all over me like a nutmeg-grater.

After I was stripped they kept me in the open for a moment or two while they conversed among themselves and pretended that they were paying not the slightest attention to me. Then they took me over to the shanty, shoved me in and closed the door. The place was small, not more than eight feet square, but the heat was intense, and I pressed myself up against the farthest wall to get as far away as I could from that fiery bonfire. Then through a small window they threw pail after pail of water—not on me, but on the hot stones around the fire. The effect was appalling; the little room became filled with hot steam. I felt that I was going to be boiled alive! Through the steam I could see the burning logs, and I kept as far away from them as I could. After a while they let me out into the open air while the fire was replenished, and then I was thrust back again and put through the same ordeal. I don't know which was the worst, the cold outside or the fearful heat inside, although they gave me enough opportunities to judge.

At length they tired of this form of torture and for a change threw me into a tub of water which was so cold that I don't know how they kept it from freezing. Every time I attempted

## THE "FIGHTING THIRD DRAGOONS"

to get out, which I did almost instinctively, they threw me back, and I finally stayed where I was put.

The cold bath was followed by a massage such as only Russian soldiers can give. Perhaps it saved my life; but while it was going on I had no idea that that was its purpose. Every one of them seemed to hit me at once.

"And now, Paul Iogolevitch," declared Stassie, who had acted as master of ceremonies, "you may dress yourself and we will consider your application for membership in the best company of the best squadron of the best regiment in the best army in the world!"

I knew, by the smile on his face as he spoke, that he was only kidding and that I had already been accepted, and I thanked the company for the honor they had done me and expressed the hope that they would not regret it.

"One minute, Iogolevitch," interrupted Stassie, after I had shaken hands all around, "don't forget you're only a 'plain' member of the company now; to become an 'honorable' member it is necessary now to go through the initiation ordeal again. Are you ready?"

"Not on your life, Stassie," I replied, appreciating the evident fact that he was joking. "A 'plain' member is honor enough for me. I'll become an 'honorable' member some other time and, preferably, in some other way."

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

"Very well, just as you say, Paul," he replied. "And now you are privileged to call me by my first name."

I answered that I would rather call him by some other name, but I would wait until I had fully recovered from the "initiation" before I applied it.

In the evening the *porutchik* (lieutenant) of our company, a man named Panunsev, a typical Russian cavalryman, hard as nails and stern of visage, said he would give me a try-out. I was given a horse, which I afterward christened Wania, and put through a few cavalry exercises. I was so stiff from the manhandling I had received that afternoon that I don't know how I was able to go through with it, but I did. Panunsev told me I had done wretchedly, but one of the men told me that he usually meant the opposite of what he said, and from the encouraging way he had patted me on the shoulder as he instructed me to take care of the horse and then turn in, led me to think that the man was right.

The next day we learned that the Third Dragoons was to leave for the front at four the following morning. Our whole organization immediately became alive with bustling activity. Despite the excitement, I was able to get enough equipment from the quartermaster and from members of the regiment, who were kind enough to help me out, to make some sort of an appear-

## THE "FIGHTING THIRD DRAGOONS"

ance—what sort of an appearance I could judge from the smiles my appearance invariably produced wherever I went. Nothing fitted me. My hat was so big it slipped over my eyes. I could turn around inside my shoes, but I filled them with paper and that made them half-way serviceable. All the overcoats offered me were impossible, and I decided to wear my sailor-suit under my uniform instead. It served two purposes: it provided me with additional warmth and it helped fill out the uniform.

My equipment consisted of a saber, a gun, a lance, and a belt of bullets. The saber was so long—or I was so short—that it dragged on the ground. We were supposed to carry only two hundred bullets. I was so ambitious I asked for four hundred! They weighed like four thousand.

When the call to assembly came the next morning I carried my lance in my right hand and with my left led my horse to the spot where we were to fall in.

Stassie nearly collapsed with laughter when he saw me.

"Good Lord! Paul," he declared, between convulsions, "throw that lance away. You'll kill more Russians than you will Germans with it! Anyway, don't come within a mile of me, that's all I tell you!"

As it happened, however, it was right next to

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

Stassie that the *porutchik* ordered me to take my position.

"Stassie will take care of you on the march, Iogolevitch," he ordered. "Stick to him."

As we stood in line, unmounted, four abreast, Wania, my horse, started to get nervous and jump around. If my shoes hadn't been so big, I think my feet would have been crushed a dozen times. As it was, Wania's hoofs landed most of the time on my excess shoe and missed my toes.

We stood in line a few minutes, and then the order came, "Mount!"

The company leaped to the saddle as one man—except me. I made a frantic effort to do the same thing, but the weight of my equipment just anchored me to the ground. It was like trying to swim attired in a heavy overcoat. I looked appealingly at Stanislav, but he had turned his head the other way.

Again I tried, but still I couldn't make it, and then while I was still struggling to mount the order came, "March!"

Gathering all my strength, I sprang again to the saddle, and this time I made it, but lo! in the attempt I let go my lance and in trying to save it I fell off the horse!

The men behind me cursed—I had broken up their formation. The next moment somebody's strong hand had grabbed me by the neck and lifted me bodily across my horse, and I quickly



THE NEXT MOMENT SOMEBODY'S STRONG HAND HAD GRABBED ME  
BY THE NECK

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

found my stirrups. I don't know who my kind friend was, but it wasn't Stassie. He was shaking so with laughter that I half expected him to fall out of his saddle, and I wished he would. The officers, who were riding ahead of us, I was glad to see, pretended not to have noticed my fiasco.

For an hour or two we marched along without incident. Then we dismounted and got our breakfast. When the time came to resume I saw to it that Wania was standing near a slight rising in the ground, and I was able to mount without difficulty, a small piece of leather which I had attached to my stirrup and which formed a sort of extension helping me considerably.

Except when we stopped for meals we were on the march most of the day. At night we broke alignment and trotted along more or less at will. At one point we came to an encampment where thousands of soldiers were sitting around bonfires. It made a wonderful picture in the black Russian night, the flares from the bonfires not only lighting up the soldiers' faces, but occasionally revealing an artillery wagon or a motor-lorry traversing the winding roads. The men were singing. From almost every direction I heard the familiar strains of:

‘Three hamlets, two villages  
Eight girls, I only—’

## THE "FIGHTING THIRD DRAGOONS"

and the other military songs which our men never seem to get tired of singing.

I was so entranced with the picturesqueness of the scene that before I was aware of it my company got far ahead of me, and soon I realized that I was alone. I galloped ahead, but did not overtake my companions. I shouted "Stanislav!" and a dozen voices answered me from around the fires, but there came no answer from my comrade.

Meeting a cavalryman coming from the opposite direction, I asked him whether he had passed my company, and he said that some company, perhaps mine, had turned off to the left a quarter of a mile farther on and were entraining.

When I turned to the left as directed I landed in a thick bog. Wania could make no headway, and I jumped off to try to lead her out of the mud. I stuck in it so fast, myself, that I was afraid I would lose my boots.

In this dilemma I was just about convinced that I would never be able to catch up with my company, when I heard a horseman coming in my direction and I shouted to him. It was Stassie. He had been sent back to look for me. With his help I and my horse finally got out of the bog, and we galloped back to the regiment.

Stanislav was silent for a moment or two, and then suddenly he broke out with a verse to the following effect:

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

"He heard his country calling,  
A call to stir the blood,  
He yelled aloud, 'I'm coming,'  
But his feet were fast in mud!  
Tra-la, tra-la, tra-la,  
Tra-la, tra-la, la-lee."

When we pulled up at the railway tracks we found our company engaged in leading their horses up inclined planks into the freight-cars. Every one's horse seemed to go up the runways willingly enough except Wania. She wouldn't budge. We tried various schemes, but without effect, which provoked Stassie to sing out:

"You cannot blame poor Wania,  
She is a wise old pony,  
The freight-car has no charms for her,  
She feels she is too bony!  
Tra-la, tra-la, tra-la,  
Tra-la, tra-la, la-lee."

And then he took my horse by the head, rubbed his own against her face, whispered something in the animal's ear, pointed to the door, and the next moment, to our surprise, Wania bolted up the incline so eagerly that one might have thought we had been holding her back!

We followed our horses into the cars at once and an hour or two later the train started. We

## THE "FIGHTING THIRD DRAGOONS"

traveled for two days without incident, living on canned food, and disembarked at Keidany, a little town near Kovno, in Lithuania.

There we took possession of the estate of a Lithuanian noble, a wonderful place, and the officers occupied the mansion, while we found quarters in the smaller houses. The stables provided the best quarters for our horses that they had had in a long while.

At the first opportunity we took a stroll around the little town of Keidany. It showed very plainly the effects of German artillery fire and air-raids. Numbers of buildings were in ruins and most of the stores were closed up.

Some of the inhabitants told us that two weeks before the Huns had come within a mile or two of the town and they had prepared for the worst, and then something had happened and the foe had retreated. Later we met some infantrymen who told us that they had participated in the defense of the line. They had stopped the Huns, but their forces had not been strong enough to drive the enemy back. "That's what you're here for, I suppose!" he added.

The prospect of actual fighting at last pleased all of us. That was what we were in the army for, and that, it turned out, was what we were about to have.

## VI

### DEAD MAN'S SHOES

THE next morning our division started off again. We made a wonderful picture when we were in line. There were four cavalry regiments, the light artillery, the machine-gun corps, the heavy batteries, aviation corps, and the food transports, and, bringing up the rear, was the hospital unit.

I often looked back, hoping to get an idea of what a whole division looked like when on the march, but the winding roads usually cut my view short. Once, however, when we had traversed a particularly long stretch of straight roadway which climbed a hill I turned my head as we reached the summit, and got a view of the whole division, and it thrilled me all through. "I pity the poor Huns who run foul of *this outfit*," I said to myself.

We had traveled about eight miles when the division stopped and Porutchik Panunsev, our company commander, acquainted us with the fact that our particular squadron was going on

## DEAD MAN'S SHOES

ahead on patrol work. It was to be our duty to feel the way for the rest of the forces in the drive that was to be made against the Huns.

After we had formed in companies we were ordered to load our rifles and revolvers and be ready for combat.

Everything was done without excitement, but I could tell from the tense atmosphere that pervaded officers and men alike that we were apt at any moment to be in action, and I cannot say that the prospect left me unperturbed.

Two of our men were ordered to advance half a mile, two more a quarter of a mile, one was sent off into the woods to the right, and another was sent over to the woods on the left, while several soldiers were ordered to follow us at a quarter of a mile and half a mile respectively. I congratulated myself that I was left with the main body.

In that formation we advanced, Stassie explaining to me why the men had been deployed as I have described, but the object, of course, was obvious.

We proceeded in this fashion for about two hours, riding slowly and cautiously. The weather changed suddenly. A terrible cold wind sprang up and went right through us. Without an overcoat I felt it very severely and my teeth were soon chattering—although whether the cold

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

was entirely to blame for that I would not like to say.

"Better take my coat, Paul," offered Stassie.  
"You're shivering!"

"No, Stassie, I'll be all right in a little while. I've got another suit under my uniform, you know. It *is* awful c-c-cold, b-b-but it's no w-w-w-worse for me than it is for the other f-f-f-fellows!"

Then Stassie started telling us anecdotes to make us forget the cold and relieve the strain which, as the faces of most of the men showed, we all felt. The idea that at any moment we might run into a withering machine-gun fire, which the enemy would naturally hold until we were well within range, was anything but inspiriting. Even with our advance-guards to warn us of danger, it was possible that we might be allowed to march right into a trap, and I suppose we were all aware of it, although none of us mentioned it.

In this frame of mind we showed little appreciation of Stassie's "funny stuff," and, noticing our depression, Captain Solntsef ordered some of the men who could sing to get together and give us a song. Stassie and three or four others accordingly rode up and started a lively melody. It was cut short by three shots, one after another, followed by the sound of horses galloping directly toward us.

## DEAD MAN'S SHOES

We sought cover in the forest which lined the road on either side of us, unslung our rifles, which we carried across our backs, and awaited developments.

A moment later we recognized our advance-guard coming toward us, and Captain Solntsef galloped forward to meet them.

A blast from the captain's whistle was a signal for Panunsev to send a few men forward. He chose three, including Stassie, and after they joined the captain they all proceeded down the road, and I lost sight of them.

The rest of us were ordered to form a circle two deep, the men with lances making the outer ring and the others, with drawn sabers, forming the inner one. In this position we stood for a few minutes. My mouth was dry and I trembled considerably. Perhaps it was from the cold. At any rate, the suspense was more nerve-racking than actual fighting would have been. If the Huns were coming at us, why didn't they come?

From the distance came the sound of irregular rifle-firing and then the captain and the rest of the men came galloping toward us, with two extra horses—one riderless and the other bearing a soldier whose coat was bloody and who, by his helmet, I recognized to be a German.

The sight of a German prisoner stirred me and I was rather surprised that the rest of our men showed no enthusiasm—as though captur-

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

ing German soldiers was an every-day occurrence to them.

"Iogolevitch, you speak German, don't you?" the captain asked.

"Yes, captain."

"Ask this man his name, regiment, and what brought him here."

I put the questions as directed, but the prisoner refused to give his name or regiment, and I obtained them from papers in his pockets, which the captain had directed me to search.

"What brought you here?" I demanded, sternly.

"The Russian soldiers!" he answered, facetiously.

I translated his answer to my commander, who, seeing that we could get nothing of value out of him, called two soldiers and ordered them to take the prisoner and the extra horse back to our main forces. Among his papers was a scout map, which indicated that he had been on patrol duty the same as we were, and I could not help thinking that this patrol work was pretty risky business.

We proceeded a little more cautiously, doubling our guards in each direction, as we were certain that the patrol we had run into, part of which had escaped, indicated that the Germans were in force somewhere in the vicinity.

In the afternoon we came to an open plain

## DEAD MAN'S SHOES

near the village of Eragola, where we were supposed to camp until morning and wait for our main forces.

Our company was ordered to proceed to the village, the rest of the squadron following at a distance, a line of communication between our company and the squadron being maintained by means of men stationed at distances of a quarter of a mile.

The road was wider here, and we formed our company of thirty men in two lines, the lancers forming the front rank and the others the rear. Our sergeant, a short, sturdy Caucasian named Demetri Pirov, was sent ahead, Stassie was posted a quarter of a mile to the right, and I was detailed as Panunsev's messenger.

About midway between the plain, where we had left our squadron, and Eragola we met a peasant with a horse and cart.

"The Germans are at Eragola!" he shrieked. "Their cavalry arrived this morning — they turned us out of our houses—they made us dig trenches—they are preparing for more soldiers to come to-night! You will be outnumbered; you better turn back!"

Without comment Panunsev ordered us to proceed, and we trotted along. On our left there was a ravine, on the other side of which was a hut. Our left guard was ordered to approach it and look it over.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

He reached the ravine and was just about to cross it when there came a shot from the hut and he fell from his horse, his lance falling from his hand and his arms hanging limp at his sides. As he fell he yelled frantically. We were about to run to him, when we recognized his apparent cry of pain to be: "Stop! Keep away!"

Panunsev ordered us to close up into mass formation, so that, from a distance, we could not be distinguished individually, and then he directed three of our men to dismount, leaving their horses in the mass, and crawl along the ground toward our fallen comrade. As the men started on their mission of rescue the rest of us, with the three horses, were ordered to gallop off, as though we had decided to abandon our fallen left guard.

When we had covered quite a distance and reached a hill we were halted, and Panunsev took his field-glasses to the top of the hill to observe the work of our rescue-party. As his messenger I dismounted and accompanied him.

With my naked eye I could see several specks emerge from the hut, advance toward the ravine on the other side of which lay our wounded comrade, and then I noticed some more specks come out from behind some haystacks which we had not been able to see before because the hut had obscured them.

I saw them descend the ravine and then I

## DEAD MAN'S SHOES

lost them. A moment or two later one of them reappeared on our side of the ravine, and then I saw a flash come from his rifle. Almost simultaneously something flew toward his head—it looked like a gun—and he toppled over backward into the ravine.

His place was immediately taken by two others, who promptly dropped to the earth—whether they had been shot or were merely seeking cover I could not see.

"Now, Iogolevitch, we'll go for them!" Panunsev declared, running down the hill, mounting his horse, and ordering us to follow him.

With shouts and cheers we flew down the road and never stopped until we reached the ravine. There we found the two Germans whom I had seen fall, but who had not been hit, in the hands of our rescue-party. In the ravine we found our left guard's horse. He himself was uninjured—he had dropped from his horse at the first shot merely as a ruse. There, too, we found the body of the first Hun who had fallen. He was dead.

The two prisoners, tied to their horses, and the third horse were then sent back to our division under guard of one soldier and we proceeded on to Eragola.

When we reached the outskirts of the village two of our men were sent ahead to secure whatever information they could, but they returned

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

very soon and reported that they could not get near enough to the village to learn anything worth while without showing themselves, and they had not been fortunate enough to meet any of the villagers.

"We have with us, *porutchik*," suggested Stassie, "a young soldier who, underneath his uniform, wears a sailor-suit. Let him take off his uniform, forget for the moment that he is a soldier, and walk boldly into Eragola as a civilian. Could anything be simpler?"

"That's a good idea, Stassie," responded Pannunsev. "How about it, Iogolevitch?"

For answer I tore off my blouse and got out of my trousers and was ready to proceed. It was easy enough to start off, with my whole squadron looking on, but as I got farther and farther away from them and nearer and nearer to the village which I knew was occupied by the enemy my heart beat fast. My errand was a dangerous one, despite Stassie's rose-colored prospect.

I had ripped my suit here and there to make it look old and worn, and the wind penetrated my clothing so easily that I shivered with the cold, but the excitement of my adventure made me oblivious to the discomfort of it.

Near the village I met an old Jew with a long beard, and with a sigh of relief, figuring that I could perhaps learn from him all it was

## DEAD MAN'S SHOES

necessary for me to find out, I stopped him and asked him the news. He was stone-deaf! He took me by the arm and, turning back in the direction of the village, he conducted me to his



"WHAT WAS THE MEANING OF THE THREE HORSES I NOTICED NOT FAR FROM HERE?"

home, a little hut, probably imagining that I was looking for a lodging.

Just before we came to this hut I noticed several horses tied to a post. Little flags flew from the tops of the lances which had been left with the horses, but the riders, who I imagined

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

must be German soldiers, were nowhere to be seen. Farther on I saw more horses, but we did not encounter any soldiers.

In the hut was a young girl, the old man's daughter. I told her that I had just come in from one of the neighboring towns and was hungry, and she became very friendly and brought me some bread to eat.

"What was the meaning of the three horses I noticed not far from here?" I asked her. "They were tied to a post and there were three lances with little flags at their heads? Are our troops in Eragola?"

"Why, don't you know? It's the Germans! They are in the village! They arrived this morning. All day long they made the men dig the trenches—everybody in the village except some of the Jews who could speak German, whom they used as interpreters to convey their orders to the rest. They told us that there would be many German soldiers here by to-night, and they kept us hard at work so we would have the trenches ready for them. I just wish some of our soldiers would get here first!"

"Perhaps they will!" I answered, and then, without telling her who I was—which under the circumstances I thought would be foolhardy—I thanked her for her kindness, and retraced my steps as fast as I could. I had heard enough.

I reported promptly to Porutchik Panunsev,

## DEAD MAN'S SHOES

and by the time I had gotten into my uniform again the order was given to us to start for the village at once. We galloped down the road, and as we entered the village we were greeted with a volley of shots from the German cavalry-men, who had observed our approach and who had hastily mounted. We returned their fire, and they turned and fled—evidently unaware of the fact that we were but a handful.

Entering the village, Panunsev posted guards all around the place. We took possession of the Polish church and used its tower as an observation post. I was assigned to take care of the horses and secure food for them—which reminded me that but for the crust of bread the Jewish girl had given me I hadn't eaten all day. At one of the houses where I saw a light burning, near the stable, I got something to eat, for which I paid as much as I could spare, and then I went back to the horses and, lying down in the dirt, fell asleep.

I had been sleeping about an hour when I was aware of somebody shaking me and shouting in my ear.

"Get up, Paul, will you? The sergeant's outside, I tell you!" It was Sergey Wolinski, one of our men.

I pulled myself together, but could hardly get to my feet, my head seemed so heavy from fatigue and cold.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

"Come now, Iogolevitch!" Sergeant Pirov ordered, as he entered the stable. "You are to relieve Stassie." Then he told me how to get to the spot where Stassie was posted, and I started off.

"Better take your gun with you, bonehead! You may need it!" Pirov commented, observing that I left it lying where I had laid it when I fell asleep.

I walked to the place the sergeant had indicated, but Stassie was nowhere to be seen. I hunted for him in the woods, but it was more than half an hour before I found him.

"It's a wonder you wouldn't wait till morning, Paul!" he complained. "I've been on duty here for four hours and I'm ready to drop. Now then, get a move on you, will you?" He could see that I was still only half awake, and before he could leave me it was necessary for him to take me over the post I was to cover and give me all the instructions that I was supposed to follow.

"There's only one thing more, Paul!" he concluded. "Being found asleep on post is the worst crime a soldier can commit. If the *poruchik* catches you, he may order me to shoot you cold. Now be a good fellow, Paul, and keep awake, will you? I don't want any shooting practice to-night; I want to sleep!" Prodding me in the stomach with the butt of his

## DEAD MAN'S SHOES

rifle, he made off through the woods and I was left alone.

It was pitch-dark. I couldn't see three feet ahead of me. In the stillness of the night the slightest rustling of the trees was magnified a thousand times. After a few minutes I became more accustomed to the darkness, and was able to pace up and down without walking into trees or tripping over the underbrush. The exercise aroused me. When I felt I was sufficiently awake to take care of myself I found a nice place in the shrubbery and decided to lie down and use it as a listening-post. Sentry duty in such a spot as this was a case of listening more than watching, anyhow, and I could hear better lying down than when I was pacing to and fro. As I strained my ears for strange sounds the silence seemed to become more pronounced. Time and time again, as a twig would break or a bird would flutter from one tree to another, I felt sure that some one was advancing, and I would raise my piece nervously to my shoulder and challenge the supposed intruder.

"Who goes there!" I would shout as fiercely as I could. My voice sounded very peculiar in the night air, echoing through the trees. There was never any response to my challenges.

It was very cold, but I am free to confess I was covered with perspiration from the excitement of my vigil. In the few hours that I was

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

on watch that night I think every incident in my whole life passed before me in review, but perhaps the episode which came before me most distinctly was that interview with Boris in our bedroom when I had revealed to him my purpose to enlist.

"*You* enlist! Why, you're even afraid to sleep alone, Paul, and you know it!" he had remarked, satirically.

God knows this night I wasn't afraid to *sleep* alone—sleep would have been a happy relief—but to *stay awake* in that silent forest, waiting, waiting for a possible shot or bayonet-thrust from out the dark—that made me sweat, and I don't mind admitting it!

For company's sake I thought I would walk to the extreme end of my post and pass the hour of night with the sentinel who was covering the adjoining post. I waited at the spot where our posts met. Five minutes—ten minutes—fifteen minutes passed, and he didn't appear. I whistled low—thinking that he, too, might have established a listening-post somewhere in the vicinity—but got no response. Dawn was beginning to break and the darkness was not so intense. I peered through the shrubbery, but I could see nothing.

I was about to give up my quest when I thought I noticed something moving carefully through the shrubbery.

## DEAD MAN'S SHOES

"Halt!" I shouted, bringing my piece to my shoulder and taking careful aim.

There was no answer and the movement stopped. Thinking I had been mistaken or that it was some small animal, and not wishing to alarm the guard by firing unnecessarily, I lowered my rifle and walked away about ten feet, figuring that if the movement I thought I had noticed had indeed been that of an intruder, my ruse would lead him to resume his original plan, when—bang!—a gun went off not six feet from me and a bullet whizzed right past my head!

I dropped to the ground instantly, but before I could take aim and fire, a second shot rang out and a bullet grazed my gun near the trigger and knocked the piece out of my hands.

Picking up the gun by the sling, I ran for cover, blowing my guard whistle as loud as I could. As I did so a figure jumped up from the ground and disappeared in the woods.

A moment later the rest of the guard was around me.

"What's the matter, Paul?" they asked me all at once, excitedly.

I explained to the sergeant the cause of the firing, showing him the abrasion on my rifle where the bullet had grazed it.

"Where's Kuzmov? What was he doing?"

Kuzmov was the sentinel covering the ad-

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

joining post. I was unable to answer their questions. I hadn't seen him all night.

The sergeant blew a whistle, which was the signal for the sentry to report, but Kuzmov didn't appear in response to it. After waiting several minutes, we were detailed as a searching-party to find Kuzmov.

The thought that worried me as we beat about the bushes was, "Suppose I find Kuzmov asleep, what shall I do?" To report him would mean his summary execution at the hands of a court martial. To try to shield him would probably mean my own court martial, for if he were found unharmed it would be mighty hard to explain how it was he had not heeded the sergeant's whistle. I didn't want to find Kuzmov.

Suddenly from one of our men came the cry, "Here he is!"

Running over to where I had first noticed the moving object, I found the sergeant and one or two men bending over the form of poor Kuzmov. He was indeed asleep—the sleep from which there is no awakening. His body was so full of bayonet wounds that it looked like a sieve; his head was crushed almost beyond recognition. But for his form and his uniform we should not have been sure of his identity.

Some of the soldiers went through his clothes to collect his effects, but I walked away. The sight had sickened me. The thought that I

## DEAD MAN'S SHOES

might have been in his shoes and suffered his fate made me shudder. His glassy eyes, which remained open, haunted me ever after. I can see them now. In the days that were to come I was to see death many times and in various forms, but it was something to which I never became callous. I remember, in this connection, a visit I paid to the Medical Department of the University of Moscow with one of the students who was a friend of mine. It was after the war was over so far as I was concerned. He took me into the dissecting-room and led me to a table around which several students were gathered. As we approached, one of the students left the table and I got a glimpse of the corpse they were dissecting. One glimpse was enough. I took my friend's arm and led him from the room.

"Come, Petrovitch," I said, "let's go somewhere else."

"What's the matter with you, Paul? Any one would think, after all your experiences, that sights like this would seem tame."

"No," I answered. "I came near to death myself so many times that the sight of a dead body brings before my eyes a kaleidoscopic picture of the dangers I went through. Whenever I saw a victim on the battle-field I used to think of the thoughts that must have run through his mind in his last moments—the same

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

kinds of thoughts that ran through my mind when it seemed that my last moment had come. In the stiff form and glassy-eyed countenance lying on that table I see a composite picture of scores of victims who made the supreme sacrifice. Come, let us get out in the air. This place stifles me!"

But to return to Eragola.

I was relieved from further sentry duty at once—my watch was nearly up, anyway—and went back to the village. There I made an official report of the occurrence.

In the streets I ran across a number of men from the rest of our squadron as well as from other regiments in our division, which had evidently caught up with us during the night.

When I reached the hut where our company was quartered one of our men threw me a pair of boots which he had been examining rather closely.

"Better take 'em, Paul," he declared. "You're entitled to them, and they're smaller than the ones you are wearing, too. You can have the overcoat, too, if you want to. It has some blood stains on it and there are some ugly holes in it, but it is better than none."

From his reference to the coat, I inferred that it, as well as the boots, had belonged to poor Kuzmov, and I let the latter lie where he had thrown them. I couldn't bear to handle them, much less to wear them.



"YOU POOR FIDDLER! DON'T YOU KNOW A DEAD MAN'S BOOTS ARE  
THE LUCKIEST YOU CAN WEAR?"

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

"What's the matter, Paul? Aren't they good enough for you?" he asked, noticing that I had apparently rejected them.

"No, Demetri, I think they're too big," I answered, indifferently, and then, not wanting to appear chicken-hearted, I picked them up and pretended that I was going to appropriate them.

Later, when Demetri left the room, I decided to deposit them behind an old chest of drawers, and I was disposing of them in that way when Stassie entered the room.

"For the love of Peter, what are you doing with that perfectly good pair of boots, Paul?" he demanded.

"Why, Stassie, they belonged to poor Kuzmov," I answered, in a tone of awe that I could not disguise. "I'd rather go barefooted than wear them."

"You idiot! You poor fiddler! Don't you know a dead man's boots are the luckiest you can wear? Put them on this minute or I'll mighty quick show you the ones you have on are the *unluckiest* you ever wore!"

Stassie was so excited about it that I complied and, disgusted as I was, put on the blood-stained boots. In the months that followed I soon forgot their uncanny association, but if the charm they bore helped to pull me *through* the dangers I encountered, it certainly did not operate to keep me out of them!

## VII

### COLD STEEL

WITH my newly acquired boots on, I thought I might be lucky enough to get a decent breakfast if I could find the house where I had procured a meal the night before. It did not take me long to find it, and I asked the lady who came to the door, who appeared to be Jewish, whether she would furnish me breakfast, for which I was prepared to pay.

She asked me in and prepared me some tea and brought me bread and butter. I was just about through when five soldiers came into the room. There were not chairs enough for all of them, but they managed to seat themselves on the three chairs that were already placed at the table.

"Hurry up, old woman!" they ordered, roughly, "we want some breakfast, and we want it quick!"

"Will you pay me—as this young soldier is going to do?" the woman asked, politely enough. "I have but a scanty supply of food for my hus-

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

band and myself; I cannot afford to *give* it away!"

"Don't ask idle questions!" one of the soldiers answered, angrily, bringing his fist down heavily on the table. "You ought to feel honored that we are willing to eat your dirty food! Bring us breakfast, I tell you, and bring it quick, or you will have no further use for food or anything else!"

And then, turning to his comrades, he asked, disgustedly:

"What do you think of these Jews? Didn't I tell you they're working hand in hand with the Huns?"

"That's a lie!" I cried, jumping to my feet. My blood was boiling. "*I'm* a Jew and *I'm* fighting against the Huns just as hard as you are! This woman is a Russian and she's entitled to be treated as a Russian. Even the Huns would treat their own women better than you are treating her!"

The woman heard my angry words, and, evidently fearing trouble, brought the men food without further protest. They glared at me while they ate their bread and drank their tea and made some insulting remarks about the woman of the house, but they did not answer me, which was fortunate, perhaps—for me.

After they had eaten they got up and left the place without paying a cent!

## COLD STEEL

The woman went into the adjoining room and threw herself across a bed, starting to cry.

"It is against the law for soldiers to act this way," I told her, trying to comfort her. "I will report these men and you'll be paid by the Commissary Department. It may take a little time, but you'll be paid eventually."

"It is not so much the money—although I can ill afford to feed strangers for nothing," she wept. "But why do they insult me and my people? Is it nothing that my son fights for Russia? Why is Russia so ungrateful to his mother?"

The incident upset me. There might have been some justification for acting that way in enemy territory, but why should Russian soldiers act so unfairly to their own people?

When I got back to our quarters I spoke to the *porutchik* about it.

"Yes, Iogolevitch," he admitted, "it is against the law, but what can I do? The government itself, you know, has always been against the Jews, and you can't expect these *muzhiks* in uniform to act any better. Why, we've just received an order from the Grand-Duke Nicolai Nicholevitch, the commander-in-chief, to watch the Jews closely and to deal with them summarily if we have any doubt of their loyalty. Three officers may constitute themselves a court, try any Jew that is suspected, and may order

## 'THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

his immediate execution if convinced of his guilt!"

This intelligence made me very unhappy because I felt that many innocent members of my faith would undoubtedly suffer death under such a drastic rule. I determined to keep my eyes and ears open when quartered in these villages and ascertain, if possible, whether there was any real justification for the suspicion leveled against the Jews.

An hour or two later we were ordered to proceed. This time I was assigned with another man as rear-guard. We rode a quarter of a mile behind the company.

My companion was a peculiar fellow named Matvay Kapustin. I had never liked him because he was always boasting about the great pull he had in the regiment. A couple of years afterward, when I went to America, I heard a term which puzzled me. I couldn't find it in the dictionary which I was using, but when, upon inquiry, I found out what it signified I thought how well it would have fitted Matvay—poor fellow, he suffered terribly later on as the result of Hun barbarism. Matvay Kapustin was a "four-flusher."

"I'm only a corporal," he chattered as we trotted along, "but the general himself wouldn't dare to cross me. I had some trouble with a *polkovnik* once. When he was transferred he

## COLD STEEL

realized that it does not pay to run foul of Matvay Kapustin! Better watch yourself, Iogolevitch!"

I paid little attention to him. His chatter went in one ear and out the other. I was glad, however, when, an hour or two later, I was relieved and sent forward, with Stassie, ahead of the advance-guard. Stassie was given a map, and in accordance with instructions which were given him we followed a by-road which led into the woods, where we joined Company No. 2 of our squadron, Stassie and I still acting as advance-guard.

Suddenly Stassie's horse snorted and almost simultaneously a shot rang out behind us, followed by twenty or thirty more. A second or two later our two companies came galloping past us, almost throwing us from our horses as they swept by, and then came some more shots. My horse reared up on his hind legs and threw me. Stassie, who was trying to hold in his mount, which did not seem to like the idea of being passed by the rest of the company, bent down quickly from his saddle, grabbed my hand, and with all his strength swung me up in front of him, and dashed off into the woods on our left, through which we made our way in an effort to overtake our comrades.

The branches of the tree struck us cruelly. I was lying face down across the horse's neck,

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

and Stassie's left hand was pressed heavily on my back, while my legs were squeezed tightly behind his lance, which was attached to both his right arm and right foot.

We caught up with our company about a quarter of a mile farther on, where they were waiting for us, and there we were joined by Wania, who came galloping down the road. Blood was streaming from her chest, and Panunsev, after examining the wound, ordered me to shoot the animal. Poor Wania! I would sooner have shot myself. Seeing my repugnance to take the animal's life, a soldier of Company 2 took my revolver from my hand and, while I turned my back, shot poor Wania twice in the head.

I continued to ride with Stassie until we came to a row of huts which formed the outskirts of the village of Betigola, where, we were told, there was quite a force of Germans in possession.

Panunsev informed us that we were to take the village at the point of the bayonet, and we were ordered to dismount. Leaving a few men to guard the horses and the equipment which we didn't need, we fixed our bayonets and marched down the road.

Broken telegraph wires and other signs indicated that the Germans had captured the village only after a bitter fight. Every hundred yards or so we came upon the body of a dead horse,

## COLD STEEL

with glassy eyes and stomach blown up to an enormous size from the gases which had formed when putrefaction set in, and legs rising straight and stiff in the air like pieces of wood. A terrible odor came from the rotting carcasses.

When we came to a point from which through field-glasses we could see the village we waited for the other two companions of our squadron, which had been ordered to join us. With them we had in all about a hundred men.

Between us and the village lay an open plain. The companies which had joined us had brought with them a machine-gun, and it was placed upon a slight rising in the ground. Part of our men were ordered off to the right flank, making their way through the woods, and another body was sent over similarly to the left. When we were all properly placed a signal was given and we started to move forward on our hands and knees.

Crawling along in this way, we came upon some trenches which some of our men were ordered to occupy to cover us if we were compelled to retreat.

We had advanced within perhaps five hundred yards of the village when the enemy's patrols spied us and opened fire from the houses.

Panunsev blew a whistle. Our machine-gun started to rattle away. A moment later the enemy came charging at the machine-gun, figur-

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

ing, no doubt, that it represented the center of our attacking force.

I was with the party that had been told off to the right. As the Germans came rushing down the road, right past the point where we lay concealed in the shrubbery, I wondered why we were not ordered to attack them on the flank. I could hardly restrain myself from getting to my feet and charging at them.

"Steady, there!" commanded Sergeant Pirov, in a low voice. I was trembling a little with excitement. The gun I carried seemed very heavy, but I realized that it was the best friend I had at the moment and I clutched it firmly.

"Now, then, men, let them have it! Charge!" the sergeant shouted.

We scrambled to our feet and charged full tilt against the passing Huns. They were headed straight down the road and didn't expect to be attacked on the flank. I didn't pick out any one in particular, but suddenly I realized that the whole fight had narrowed itself down, so far as I was concerned, to a single combat.

Before me was a huge German brandishing his gun, which he held by the muzzle and had swung far above his head. I got one short glimpse of his huge figure, and one of the things that impressed me was that he wore a cap instead of the customary helmet, and around his body were *three* belts of bullets.

## COLD STEEL

That was all I saw, because then I shut my eyes and thrust my bayonet blindly toward him. It pierced his body just above the heart and loosened his hold on the rifle, which went



BEFORE ME WAS A HUGE GERMAN BRANDISHING HIS GUN

hurtling through the air, and the next moment he fell forward on top of me, knocking me to the ground.

I lay still for a moment, stunned by the fall, in which my head struck the ground heavily, and then, pushing the unconscious form of the

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

German from me, I got to my feet, withdrew my bayonet from his body, and followed my comrades, whom I could see had the Germans on the run.

We took Betigola. It was partly in flames. From the roof of one of the buildings, which was intact, we kept up a machine-gun fire after the fleeing Germans as long as they were in range, and then we established a bucket brigade and endeavored to stop the spread of the flames in the village.

An hour or so later we were joined by the rest of our division and the little village once again resumed its normal appearance, the inhabitants coming out of their houses and bringing us bread, cheese, and butter in token of their appreciation for our services in rescuing them from the Huns.

I was provided with a new horse, which I christened Waskia. When the animal was stabled I got a chance to get some sleep. I started to thank God for having brought me safely through the battle, but I was so thoroughly exhausted that I fell asleep before my prayer was finished.

In the hut where I was quartered were a number of men who did not belong to our squadron. I overheard them talking while I was getting up the next morning, and their conversation filled me with misgivings,

## COLD STEEL

Some of them had been told by Lithuanians in the village, it seemed, that while the Germans were in possession of Betigola the Jews of the village had done all they could to help them!

Knowing the hatred which these Lithuanians bore toward my race, I did not believe there was the slightest foundation for the accusations they had made, but the soldiers had been more credulous, and I knew that in very short order the rumor of the Jews' disloyalty would spread through the village and reach the ears of our officers.

I feared the worst, knowing that among the officers were many anti-Semites, and I hastened into the village to find out just what was going on.

In the main street I met a Jew. I stopped him and asked him how the rumor had arisen that the Jews had aided the enemy.

"I'm a Jew myself," I added. "You can answer me truthfully. Don't be afraid to tell me exactly what occurred."

"There is no truth in it at all, corporal!" he declared, earnestly, and with apparent sincerity. "When the Huns took possession of our village we were all ordered to dig trenches. Most of the villagers, you know, did not understand German, and so the Jews were picked out to act as interpreters. We were all soon busy at our work, Lithuanians, Poles, and Jews—all

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

except those who were used as interpreters and who acted as overseers."

"And because the Jews were seen in conversation with the German officers the conclusion was reached, I suppose, that they were working hand in hand with the Germans. Is that it?"

"Yes, sir, that is the whole truth. They had no choice in the matter. The Jews who acted as interpreters were no more to blame than the rest of us who dug the trenches, but among the diggers harsh things were said about our people."

It was just as I had thought. As I left my informant I noticed hundreds of soldiers and villagers hurrying down the main street, and I stopped one of the men of my company and asked him what the excitement was about.

"They're hanging the Jew traitors—nine of them!" he replied, and hurried after the crowd.

If he had plunged a knife into me he could not have pained me more. I ran down the street. At the end of it I saw an immense crowd. In its midst was a scaffold! The sight gave me unsuspected strength and I forced my way through the crowd as though they were so many cork figures. At the side of the scaffold was an officer.

"Captain!" I shouted, breathlessly, as I came within six feet of him. "Stop these murders! There is a terrible mistake!"

## COLD STEEL

"Silence, you dog!" he retorted, white with anger that I, a corporal, should have the temerity to address him in that fashion. "What do you mean by this insult!"

"Innocent blood is about to be shed, captain. This is no time for etiquette. I—"

His arm shot out and caught me on the point of the chin and I measured my length in the mud.

I got slowly to my feet, half stunned from the shock of the blow. My hand was on my revolver, but my better judgment restrained me.

The piercing cry of a woman attracted my attention momentarily to the scaffold. The sight will never be blotted from my brain. Eight poor wretches were standing at the foot of the scaffold—three men, two women, two boys, and a girl. Their faces were colorless, except where they were stained with blood, from cuts and scratches which they had undoubtedly received when they were seized. There was a stoic expression about their countenances in which one read the tragedy of their race. A ninth, the poor woman whose screams had attracted my attention, had fallen to the floor and was crying aloud for justice. Justice!

The tears came to my eyes at the realization of my utter helplessness. Turning from the pitiful scene, I burst through the crowd, biting my lips to keep from crying, and hurrying away

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

as fast as I could. I knew I couldn't save those poor wretches and so I wanted to get away from the spot as fast as possible, that their last despairing cries might not haunt me for the rest of my life.

I didn't stop until I got to the stable where my horse was stalled. Falling into the hay, I pulled at my hair as hard as I could, hoping that the physical pain might make me forget the mental torture of the tragedy that was being enacted down the street.

Some time later I felt a grab at my shoulder and turned to find Stassie, white-faced and serious—the first time I had ever seen him in that condition.

"It's tough, Pavlik, very tough!" he sympathized. "I feel terrible about it myself, but what's the use of grieving? Remember God is the final judge. The innocent may have suffered to-day—but the guilty will not escape."

I got to my feet and accompanied him out of the stable. We walked out of the village, anxious to get away as far as possible from the scene of that pitiful tragedy, but it was a long time before the events of that fateful day ceased to distress me.

Later on, when I visited America and came to understand how impossible such a thing was in a country where liberty is something more than a name, I realized to the full how sadly my country had suffered for the want of it.

## VIII

### SURROUNDED BY GERMANS

THE next day our squadron was ordered to advance toward the city of Rossieny. From what we heard, there were some thirty or forty thousand Germans in possession of that city. It was not expected, of course, that our little squadron of one hundred and thirty men should attack the Huns. Our job was merely to harass the German scouts and patrols and at the same time feel the way for the advance of our own forces.

Wherever possible, we proceeded through the woods. It was not easy going even in the day-time, but at night—and it got to be dark about four o'clock in the afternoon—it was particularly difficult. The lances of the men in front would bend the boughs and then they would snap back and strike the men who followed. Owing to the darkness, it was impossible to dodge the blows of the boughs, and many of us were severely scratched and bruised as a result. Finally the men with lances were ordered to

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

the rear and from that time on our progress was attended with less discomfort.

At dawn we penetrated the woods, and our advance-guards reported that through their field-glasses they could see a force of Germans occupying an estate. Solntsef evidently decided to wait until dark.

All day long we were kept in the woods, feeding our horses and ourselves from the reserve food we carried in our saddles. During the day our scouts reported that the numbers of the Germans had been increased, several detachments of infantry having been seen to enter the estate and none to come out.

In the afternoon Solntsef sent scouts forward to ascertain whether the adjoining estate was occupied by the enemy. While they were gone it started to sleet and made things very uncomfortable for us. Our day of inactivity in the woods had gotten on our nerves, anyway, and we were sleepy and fretful.

When our scouts got back we were ordered to proceed cautiously toward the estate adjoining the one in the possession of the enemy, holding the nostrils of our horses to prevent them neighing and thereby attracting the enemy's attention.

We had barely reached the estate when a dozen or more dogs began to bark vigorously. We drew our sabers and chased them, with the

## SURROUNDED BY GERMANS

idea of quieting them for good, but we only excited them the more, and we gave it up.

The damage had been done. A sky-rocket from the enemy's estate, followed by another and then a third, told us that our presence was known to the Huns. At the first flare we were ordered to place our horses under cover. We led them into a stone building which had evidently been the home of the owner of the estate. Then we went outside and lay prone, ready for a possible attack of the enemy.

A storm of machine-gun bullets struck a wooden building near where we were lying, indicating that the enemy's illuminations had disclosed our exact position.

As the enemy's aim became more accurate with each succeeding flare, we were ordered to change our positions constantly. This continued for nearly an hour, during which time we expected them to storm our estate at any moment, but it soon became evident that they had another plan in view. While the fire from the original direction was sustained we suddenly became aware that we were being fired upon from the rear and from the left as well! We were being gradually surrounded.

"Who will volunteer to get through and carry a message to our forces at Betigola?" Captain Solntsef asked, after he had explained our pre-

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

dicament. "If we don't get help before morning, we shall be annihilated!"

A dozen or more of us jumped forward. I suggested that I could remove my uniform and pass as a civilian, as I had done before.

"That would not protect you now!" the captain answered. "The Huns would fire on anything that moved out of the estate!"

"Very well, captain," I replied. "I will go as I am."

"No, Paul, I guess we'll take a more experienced man this time. Gavril Kolnin, we'll give you the honor. Step forward!"

He handed the trooper who came forward in response to the order a note which he hastily scribbled, read it to him, and wished him good luck. Without another word the soldier plunged into the darkness and disappeared from sight.

Shortly afterward the enemy began to fire on us from the right flank. We were now completely surrounded. I was lying not far from our machine-gun and I heard one of the men remark that it would have been better for us if some of us had remained in the woods with the gun so that we could have bothered the Germans from two angles.

This idea sounded good to me. I suggested it to the commander.

"If you will let me take the machine-gun and some of our men to the right of the estate,

## SURROUNDED BY GERMANS

captain, we might surprise the enemy and perhaps have a chance to break through their cordon."

He disagreed at first, but later on decided to give the plan a trial. From a dozen or more volunteers he detailed ten men besides myself to put it into execution. Stassie was one of the party.

The captain ordered our men to cease firing for a full minute and then to resume for two minutes, following this schedule four times. After the fourth spell of firing we were to move over rapidly to the right and to set our machine-gun several hundred yards nearer the enemy.

Fortunately for us, this maneuver was carried out without discovery, the enemy's flares having temporarily ceased. We were no sooner located in our new position when Stassie suggested that if we would obey his orders, he would show us a way to break through the German lines and get to the woods in safety.

We were willing to take a chance. Stassie lighted a match under his overcoat, placed three Russian cigarettes in his mouth and ignited them, inhaling so that he produced a considerable flare. Then he disappeared in the darkness, with the parting injunction to make our dash for the forest when he fired his revolver four times.

A moment later, about one hundred and fifty yards nearer the German lines we observed a

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

strange movement of a red flare in the air. It was like a huge firefly flying in circles, only it traveled faster than any firefly. The Germans must have noticed it, too, for they ceased firing—undoubtedly suspecting a trick on our part. Then came four pistol-shots in quick succession, and we dashed for the woods.

I had run but a short distance when I tripped over a form in the dark and fell forward on my face, but I picked myself up in time to see the form arise and run toward the German estate. Then I got to the woods as fast as my legs would carry me and found there the rest of our party.

We got our machine-gun to work without delay and the rest of us fired our rifles as fast as we could pull the triggers and reload.

Our ruse worked. The men who had surrounded the estate, surprised by the fire from the woods and thinking we had received reinforcements, got up and ran for their estate, dozens of them being caught, however, by our machine-gun fire. The rest of our squadron seized the opportunity to escape from the estate, mounting their horses and dashing for the woods, where we were already safely sheltered.

But where was Stassie? I was so sure that he had paid with his life for the trick which had saved the squadron that I voiced my fear to the soldier who was manning the machine-gun. Before he could answer, a voice from the darkness

## SURROUNDED BY GERMANS

cried, "For God's sake, stop the shooting a moment and give me a chance to get out of this hole!"

We stopped our fire immediately and Stassie came running toward us. He had spent half an hour in a hole half filled with mud and water, and he was soaked through. Besides, the tips of his fingers were burned by the cigarettes he had used as a torch, but apart from these minor injuries he was unharmed.

A canvass of our members revealed that eleven of us were wounded and five were missing.

In the morning we were ordered to approach the outskirts of the woods and resume our attack on the estate occupied by the Germans, but when we came to the edge of the woods we observed that it was in flames.

We waited about ten minutes, and then half of our number was ordered to take possession of the flaming estate and the other half to re-occupy the estate we had held the night before. I was among the latter, and when we got to the scene of last night's battle the first thing we did was to search for our missing. We found two of them dead and two more badly wounded, but the fifth we could find nowhere, and we assumed that the poor fellow must have been captured. Our horses were where we had left them and unharmed, although the stone building was fairly plastered with bullets.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

We did not linger long at this point. Ten of our men were assigned to carry our wounded to Betigola and the rest of us took the road in our usual formation.

Five miles along the road we came to another estate which our advance-guard reported was unoccupied. We entered it and placed our horses in the stables, which were more comfortable than the main house, fed them hay and oats, which were plentiful, and then prepared some breakfast for ourselves.

The only thing we could find in the way of food was potatoes, but it was so long since we had had anything but cold meals that the potatoes, boiled over a camp-fire, tasted as good to us as a seven-course banquet.

The excitement of the night had made us forget all about sleep, but, now that it was all over and our stomachs were fed, nature would no longer be denied, and we lay down without removing our uniforms and were soon dead to the world.

It wasn't long before we were aroused and ordered to dig trenches. They kept us at it all the morning, but in the afternoon we got another chance to catch up on the sleep we had missed.

In the evening Stassie and I were detailed to establish a listening-post about half a mile up the road.

## SURROUNDED BY GERMANS

When we reached the spot indicated Stassie suggested that we dig a trench.

"It would be better for our health—and, besides, our forms might mar the beauty of the scene!" he declared, a sentiment in which I readily concurred.

Our trench dug, we made ourselves as comfortable as we could, but a cold wind blew up and it started to rain again. We were soon drenched to the skin.

"Better get a little sleep, Paul!" Stassie suggested; "you look dead!"

"I feel it, but how about you?"

"Well, I won't be far away—sleeping, perhaps, in a more comfortable place."

I may have dozed off, but I kept one eye and both ears open most of the time, and suddenly I heard a noise from afar like the motor of an airplane. I thought at first that I was dreaming, but the noise became plainer and plainer, as though the machine were coming our way. I jumped toward Stassie, who was sound asleep in the trench, and shook him.

"Stassie!" I yelled, "isn't that an airplane?"

"Sure it's an airplane, you idiot!" he answered, turning over on his side and closing his eyes again. "I brought one along on my horse."

The motor was now too plain to be mistaken, however, and Stassie jumped to his feet.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

"By Jove, Paul! You're nearly half right, but your airplane is a motor-cycle—a German motor-cycle, too—about ten horse-power, in first-class condition. It's good for about two minutes more and then—pff!" and with a snap of his fingers he indicated the fate that was in store for the oncoming machine.

With his overcoat, his ammunition-belt, and mine he formed a rope, from which he hung our rifles and other equipment, except our revolvers, and taking one end of the improvised barricade, he crossed to one side of the road and told me to take the other end and go to the other side. It was impossible for any one to pass without hitting our barrier.

"Now, then, Paul!" Stassie whispered, "hold on for all you're worth!"

The machine came nearer and nearer. When it was almost on top of us Stassie yelled, "Careful there, or you'll bust your machine!"

His boldness almost knocked me off my feet, and the next instant something else *did*. The belt was jerked out of my hands, the motor-cycle skidded across the wet road, and I was flung over to one side of the gutter.

I got up quickly and rushed toward Stassie, who was battling with two Germans. They were on top of him and were pounding his face as hard as they could work their fists. In the excitement I forgot my revolver and jumped

## SURROUNDED BY GERMANS

into the mêlée swinging at the Huns as hard as I could with my fists.

One of the Germans stopped pounding Stassie long enough to grab me by the leg and down I went. He pulled me toward him and, drawing back his arm, aimed a blow at my face. If he had landed, I am sure he would have knocked my nose clear through the back of my head, but I drew up my right leg and kicked him in the stomach and then, with my left knee, caught him a terrific blow on the side of the head, and he fell backward unconscious.

In the mean while Stassie had succeeded in seizing the other fellow by the throat, and the next instant a flash from a revolver reminded me of my own, but when I reached for it I found it was gone. A second flash revealed Stassie still holding his prisoner and, with his revolver, covering the other fellow, who was just recovering from the stunning blow I had given him.

Then a squad of our men arrived, attracted by the shots, and we got a chance to breathe. Leaving two of the men in charge of the post, we marched back with our two prisoners and the motor-cycle, which Stassie had already decided he could use very nicely.

"I'm going to save this blood," Stassie declared, referring to the crimson stream which flowed profusely from his battered nose, "and use it as gasolene for the motor-cycle," but when

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

we reported to Captain Solntsef and Stassie laid claim to the machine as his legitimate spoil, he was informed that it would be appropriated by headquarters, which led him to remark that he was sorry headquarters couldn't have his broken nose, too.

Brought before Captain Solntsef, the Germans admitted, through me as interpreter, that they had been on their way to the estate from which we had driven the Germans the night before, and a message in their pockets revealed that large enemy forces were on their way to meet ours. The prisoners were sent back to Betigola.

The following morning we started off again. A couple of Cossacks who overtook us told us that some ten thousand of our men were in the vicinity and that, in all probability, our squadron would be sent back to rest billets, as our services would no longer be needed. That was the first cheering news we had received in many days and we were afraid it was too good to be true.

Shortly afterward, however, we received word to turn back, and after riding some ten minutes we ran into the advance-guard of the forces the Cossacks had referred to.

A little farther on we met the general of the corps and his staff, to whom our commander gave a report of our work and who then reviewed us,

## SURROUNDED BY GERMANS

For the next four miles we passed one continuous column of infantry and cavalry on their way to the front. Following them came the machine-gun corps, the engineer corps, the light artillery, and then some more infantry, a Red Cross unit, an airplane corps, telegraph and telephone companies, kitchens and food transports, and various other military units.

On account of the crowded condition of the roads our progress was necessarily slow, and in one of the estates we came to we were ordered to stay for the night. We were dead tired, and, for that reason, did not so much resent the delay, although we were very anxious for those rest billets which the Cossacks had spoken of.

After providing for our horses, I picked out the nearest corner of the stable and lay down on the wet and dirty floor without even stopping to remove my ammunition-belt. Half asleep, I heard one of the men suggest that I go outside and get some straw off the roof of one of the huts and make a bed of it as the others were doing, but I was too tired to get up, and, although the cold and dampness of the floor made me shiver and shake, I coiled up and fell asleep. I slept soundly, but was awakened from time to time by the enormous rats which infested the place and which jumped around the stable as boldly as you please, sometimes landing squarely on our bodies and sometimes on

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

our faces, but in the morning I felt considerably refreshed.

Early next morning we started on our way again and at length reached Betigola. There we spent five memorable days, although our pleasure was somewhat clouded by the fact that our commander, Captain Solntsef, was retired on account of ill health. He was a stern disciplinarian and a demon for work, but he was no shirker himself and we worked for him willingly.

Our company commander, Porutchik Panunsev, was promoted to the captaincy of the squadron, and was succeeded by a young fellow fresh from an officers' school, Podporutchik Lavronsev. He didn't look to be more than eighteen years of age, and we all felt that it was influence that had secured him the position rather than merit, but we had no say in the matter.

The day the new *podporutchik* took charge of our company, Captain Panunsev whispered to him, and then he called me over and shook hands with me and declared that he was going to procure a violin so that we could have some music during our furlough. I didn't like to be singled out by an officer who, I felt, was not going to be very popular with us, but I had to appear agreeable and I said I would do my best.

Later on he sent a soldier to me with an instrument he had secured in the village, and during the rest of our holiday we had music with our

## SURROUNDED BY GERMANS

meals, before our meals, and after our meals. We really had a very good time, and we felt particularly happy and carefree because word drifted through to us that our forces had captured the town of Rossieny, driving the enemy back *seventy* miles and capturing many prisoners, a number of whom we saw passing through Betigola.

With these reports to cheer us, we were quite at a loss to understand a terrific cannonading which broke out the last night of our furlough and which shook our building to its foundations. Some of the men climbed to the roof of the stable, but they could see nothing in the darkness. The explosions continued for an hour or more, and we finally concluded that it must be from our own guns firing at airplanes, and went back to sleep.

During the night we were awakened again, however, several heavy explosions coming one right after another. Again some of our men jumped to the stable roof. This time it was not so dark, day was beginning to break, and in the forest far away we could see clouds of smoke.

Suddenly there came a drilling sound, a loud buzzing and shrieking, and a shell flew right over our heads and exploded on the other side of the village. Another landed a moment later in about the same spot. Then came a third, which exploded right in the center of the village.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

We were being bombarded!

Without waiting for instructions, we got out our horses, saddled them, and prepared for whatever orders we might receive. We were not a moment too soon, for a shell burst right over our stable and the shrapnel took the corner off the roof.

We decided to run over to the house where our officers were quartered.

"We better wake them up," declared Stassie, "or they'll miss the performance."

As we started down the street a grenade exploded right ahead of us and we turned into a near-by alley, through which we planned to reach the main street. Coming toward us was an army wagon loaded with boxes of shrapnel. It was drawn by six horses. Just as we reached the wagon a shell exploded right above us, upsetting the wagon, throwing the horses to the ground, and injuring a woman and a child who happened to be passing.

There was a jumbled mass of horses, ammunition-boxes, and debris. We were about to turn back when a shell burst behind us and our horses leaped over the wreckage and galloped down the alley. When we reached the main street we found it jammed with artillery, transports, artillery wagons, motors, and troops. Again we turned back, and at a wild gallop made our way to a field. There we ran into a scene of

## SURROUNDED BY GERMANS

disorder such as it is almost impossible for me to describe—an army run amuck!

There were thousands of soldiers and horses running wild across the field. Guns and ammunition were scattered everywhere. Some of the soldiers had removed their boots that they might move faster. Transports and Red Cross wagons were standing upside down or hopelessly entangled with artillery and gun-carriages. Shrapnel was bursting in the air and bombs were falling from enemy planes which hovered above us like birds of prey, swooping down from time to time and spraying the confused mass with machine-gun bullets. The noise was deafening.

Soldiers carrying the wounded on stretchers dropped their pitiable burdens and ran to save themselves. The agonized cries of the wounded added to the awful din.

On the main road, which was higher than the field, panic-stricken troops were engaged in a desperate struggle among themselves, every one trying to get out of harm's way without the faintest idea of where safety lay. The struggling mass made a plain target for the German guns. The execution was terrific, the victims toppling down the side of the embankment in vast numbers.

Suddenly a grenade struck not twenty yards from me and flying splinters struck down my

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

nearest comrade. My own horse fell to her knees and I lost my seat. My animal was uninjured, however, and I scrambled back and followed my comrades through the field, although we were widely separated.

At length we managed to get out of the open field and found shelter in the woods. By the time we reached this cover we observed that our artillery had at last started a counter-attack, and shrapnel and shell were flying toward the enemy's lines over the heads of our retreating forces.

In the forest we found thirty or forty men of our regiment, but Sergeant Pirov, Stassie, and myself were the only members of our company who seemed to have found their way there. We decided to wait until morning before attempting to locate the rest of our company.

Getting off our tired horses, which were perspiring and foaming, we lay down on the ground to rest, but it was not many minutes before a colonel rode over to us and ordered us to mount and follow him.

He led us to the road and, pointing to an artillery brigade and some Red Cross and transport wagons, ordered us to accompany them. We had to do as we were ordered, although, after we had ridden several miles, we learned from one of the officers that he was bound for Kovno—a two or three days' trip!



AT LENGTH WE MANAGED TO GET OUT OF THE OPEN FIELD AND  
FOUND SHELTER IN THE WOODS

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

Stassie was very sore about it.

"I'm going to take a rest, anyway," he declared, disgustedly.

"How are you going to manage it?" I asked.

"It's very simple. Watch!" Jumping off his horse, he hitched it to one of the artillery trucks and then, climbing into the truck himself, lay down full length and, from his snoring, must have fallen asleep immediately.

The sergeant and I were afraid to do the same thing, for fear of attracting the attention of the officers and perhaps getting Stassie in trouble, and so we got what sleep we could in our saddles. We rode all that day and through the night.

At one of the villages we went through the next morning we learned the cause of the disastrous panic in our army which we had witnessed at Betigola.

Our troops, it seemed, had been entirely successful in the drive against the Huns and had indeed recaptured the town of Rossieny, as we had been informed, but large bodies of troops which had been sent from Kovno to reinforce our left flank had gone forward *without a pound of ammunition*. Colonel Petroff, the commander-in-chief of the fortress of Kovno, who was responsible for that condition and who was later found to have been a traitor to Russia, had told the commanding officers of the contingent that they would find ample ammunition when

## SURROUNDED BY GERMANS

they arrived on the firing-line, adequate provision having been made to supply them.

When they took their places in the front lines the only ammunition they received was what came from the enemy's guns! An army without ammunition is worse than helpless. Its useless guns and equipment retard its movement, and in the face of an attack retreat is the only logical course. Needless to say, the treachery that had placed our army in this awful predicament had kept the enemy fully posted and at the proper moment an attack was launched against our helpless lines, with the result that we had witnessed.

Such catastrophes as this, which, unfortunately, were far too frequent and which were invariably the result of treachery in the Russian High Command, did more to break down the morale of the Russian army than all the legitimate successes of German arms.

"Doesn't it take the heart out of you?" lamented Stassie as we continued on our way to Kovno. "I tell you, Paul, the scaffold they used at Betigola to murder those poor, guiltless Jews would have served a better purpose at Petrograd. Our armies have suffered more from treachery in our own High Command than from any superiority in the High Command of the enemy. That I am sure of!"

"I guess you're right, Stassie," I answered,

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

"but I don't see how we can do anything to change the situation."

"We've got a wonderful leader in the grand duke," Stassie went on, "and Brusiloff and Ruzky are more than a match for all the von Hindenburghs and the von Mackensens the Germans can supply, but, despite superior generalship, our armies have sometimes met reverses. Does any one complain about that? If we get the worst of it after a bitter fight in which we give almost as much as we take, we accept the situation philosophically, lick our wounds, and prepare hopefully for to-morrow's battle, don't we? That's the fortunes of war, and to-morrow's always another day. But to be sent against the enemy with our arms practically tied behind our backs—without the ghost of a fighting chance—to take all that's handed to us without a chance in the world to strike back—that's not the fortunes of war, Paul—that's wholesale murder! I'd just like to have my hands for one second on the throat of the Russian traitor who's responsible for such crimes!"

The look on Stassie's face as he expressed the last sentiment spoke volumes. He was only repeating, however, a line of protest that was being constantly voiced in the ranks of the Russian army. Successive experiences of the character of that we had witnessed at Betigola—all

## SURROUNDED BY GERMANS

brought about in precisely the same way—at length broke the spirit of the Russian army.

Sick at heart, we rode along silently. At Kovno we received a certificate from the commander for our absence from our regiment, and then we started for Keidany, from which place we hoped to be able to learn, by the use of the telephone or telegraph, where we could rejoin our command.

At Keidany we were told that our regiment was at Remigola. After riding all day we reached that village, only to be told that our regiment had not been there at all. Fortunately we stayed at Remigola that night, for, in the morning, we ran into one of the men of our regiment who was riding through the village, with two sacks of mail on his horse's back. From him we learned that the regiment was at Bessigola, and there we finally located it.

We started down the street to report to Podporutchik Lavronsev, but as we passed one of the huts Captain Panunsev jumped out and, without giving us a chance to explain, struck Sergeant Pirov a vicious blow in the face, and was about to follow it up, when I bent down from my saddle, lifted a stone from the ground, and threw it through the window of the nearest house.

The crash of the falling glass had the effect I had intended. It distracted the captain's atten-

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

tion long enough to give him a moment's reflection, and he stopped his bullying of the sergeant. But for this ruse I was quite sure there would have been a sad mix-up, with possible serious consequences, for I could see that Stassie was having a hard time to restrain himself and a second or two later would have seen him jumping from his horse and giving the captain the thrashing he deserved.

After the excitement we continued down the street, Pirov constantly wiping the blood from his face and swearing to himself.

"If I don't send a bullet through that bully's head the first chance I get," he muttered, "you can hand me over to the Huns!" and Stassie and I both felt that his resentment was fully justified.

Later we learned that the commander of our regiment had been replaced by a Colonel Karpovitch, a man who had the reputation for being as unreasonable an officer as Panunsev had proved.

With such officers we did not hope for much consideration, and in the days that were to follow we endured such hardships as only Russian soldiers would tolerate. Poor food and little of it, insufficient sleep, constant work fraught with the gravest danger, and seldom a word of praise for duties well performed—that was the program day in and day out, but we did not grumble, for that is the lot of the Russian cavalryman.

## IX

### ON PATROL

EARLY next morning our company was ordered out on patrol.

Lieutenant Lavronsev led us toward the Dubissa River. After riding some time we came to a forest, which we entered. After following the main trail for some ten miles we came to a little hut. As usual, two of our men were sent ahead to investigate, and when they signaled to us that it was unoccupied we rode up.

Sergeant Pirov, Kapustin, two other men, and I were detailed to search the hut. The first thing that caught my eye as I entered the room was a package of cigarettes lying on a table in the corner of the room. Although I did not smoke myself, I realized what a lot cigarettes meant to the others.

"Cigarettes!" I shouted, excitedly.

Kapustin and the sergeant jumped toward the table to which I pointed. Kapustin got there first and in a moment had a cigarette between his lips and had handed the box to the others.

Striking a match, Kapustin lighted his cigarette

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

and took a deep puff. Bang! Crash! A heavy explosion in the room had thrown us all off our feet. It was followed by cries of pain from Kapustin and another man who had been wounded. Before we could get to our feet a second explosion, from a corner of the room where one of the men had dropped a cigarette he had just lighted, brought down part of the ceiling.

"The dirty swine!" I shouted, realizing, of course, that the loaded cigarettes had been left by the Huns to secure the effect they had produced.

Poor Kapustin was terribly burned. His cigarette had exploded while in his mouth and half his nose and his upper lip had been blown off, while the rest of his face was a mass of burns. The others, whose cigarettes had exploded in their hands, had suffered hand burns, but were not seriously hurt.

The poor fellows jumped from one foot to another, unable to endure the intense pain of their burns. They cried for water, but the sergeant said it would only make their pain the greater. Nevertheless, when we got back to the spot where we had left the rest of the company water was procured and the men soaked their burns in it.

It seemed to relieve them for the minute, but soon their wounds turned a dark blue. Kapustin's face was horrible to see and he suffered

## ON PATROL

such terrible agony that we hoped he would die and be released. He and the others were carried to Vasilichi, where they were turned over to the regimental medical corps.

It was getting dark and we felt that we were entitled to a rest, but word came from Colonel Karpovitch, the new commander of the regiment, that our company was to proceed some few miles nearer to the river and camp in the forest all night as a reserve. During the night new orders were received. We rejoined the regiment, which moved forward in the direction of the river, and, coming to an estate, we were ordered to occupy it.

The regiment filled the estate, but our company had no chance to rest. Podporutchik Lavronsev and four men, including myself, started immediately on patrol. Entering a forest, Lavronsev used me as a sort of bodyguard. He seemed to be afraid of his own shadow. We knew that German patrols were in the vicinity and it was only a question of time before a skirmish was inevitable.

Coming to a little hut, Lavronsev sent two men forward to inspect it. We sat back about half a mile away and watched them.

Our two men rode up to the hut cautiously, jumped off their horses several hundred yards from it, and, approaching on foot, entered it. They had been inside about five minutes with-

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

out reappearing or showing themselves at the window, when the thought occurred to me that something had happened, but I said nothing.

When, however, another five minutes elapsed and still no sign of life from within, we all began to grow uneasy.

"What can be the matter with those fellows!" Lavronsev asked, nervously, trotting his horse up and down.

"Suppose we go forward and investigate, *podporutchik?*" I ventured.

"No! No! We'll stay right where we are!"

Ten minutes more elapsed and then I was tolerably sure that our men had run into trouble.

"If the *podporutchik* will allow me and Wilinski to go to the rescue of our comrades, there may still be a chance to save them!"

"No, Iogolevitch, I think we'll stay right where we are," the coward replied, trembling as he spoke.

"Very well, *podporutchik*, I will go alone, and Wilinski here will remain with you!"

Without waiting for his yea or nay I took off my sword and handed it to Wilinski, and started for the hut.

Within a hundred feet of it I stopped for a moment to listen carefully, but the beating of my heart was all I heard.

I crept a little closer, and then a deep groan, as from a man in pain, sent the blood to my

## ON PATROL

head, and, pointing my revolver at the door of the hut, I sprang toward it.

Placing my hand on the handle lightly, I turned it, but then changed my mind and threw myself flat on the ground, with my body away from the door, which I pushed open with the muzzle of my revolver.

As the door slowly opened on its hinges something heavy struck it, as though those inside had imagined that I was walking in and had aimed a heavy blow at me.

From my position on the ground I fired through the open door. There came a volley of shots in return, and I decided that I was outnumbered and that it would be idiotic for me to attempt to enter the place single-handed.

I backed toward the forest, firing as I retreated, and, seeing what was happening, Wilinski opened fire on the hut, too. The effect of our fire was to keep the Huns in the hut and it allowed me to rejoin the officer and Wilinski.

"The three of us together would have a chance against the place, *podporutchik*," I suggested, excitedly.

"I am ready, *podporutchik*," Wilinski chimed in.

"No, boys, I guess we'll leave bad enough alone. Follow me!" and, turning his horse's head in the opposite direction, we retraced our steps along the forest trail and returned to the estate to report the sad result of our adventure.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

As we were getting up the next morning some one ran into the hut and told us excitedly that the men we had lost yesterday had returned.

"They were brought in on a farm truck by a Lithuanian this morning," our informer declared. "He said he had been held up by some Germans on the road and had been ordered to convey the bodies to us. You can see them outside if you want to."

None of us were particularly anxious to see the remains of our unlucky comrades, but half an hour later, when we left our huts to fetch our horses, we couldn't help it. The bodies were lying on the ground right outside our door.

When I saw the gruesome sight a feeling of hatred and revenge such as I had never experienced in my life before came over me.

The skin of the victims was cut to pieces with a knife, the leg of one of them had been removed, the arms were three-quarters severed, the eyes had been pulled out of their sockets, and the skulls were fractured! It was an eloquent exhibition of German *Kultur*.

I ran to the stable, clenched my fists in anger, and promised myself that I would make those Huns pay for their savagery. The temper of the others was similarly aroused, and when I saw Stassie, his eyes full of fire, I knew he had some desperate plan in mind.

## ON PATROL

"Give me your revolver, Paul!" he whispered.  
"I think I'm going to need it. You needn't say anything about it, either."

I gave him the weapon without attracting attention, and he hastened away, without telling any one where he was going or what he was going for.

I didn't realize till a moment later that perhaps my place was by his side, and when I got up to overtake him a piece of paper fell from my knees.

It was a scribbled note from Stassie, and read:

DEAR PAUL:

If I am not back by six o'clock to-morrow morning, don't bother to save breakfast for me. You can then report to Lavronsev that my horse may be used as a reserve. If this is good-by, I wish you good luck!

STASSIE.

What desperate plan had he embarked on? Why hadn't he confided in me and let me share his danger with him!

I was so angry I felt like reporting his absence at once and having a searching-party sent out for him, but I soon swallowed my disappointment, realizing that Stassie was simply performing his duty as he saw it.

At supper I overheard some remarks about Stassie's unaccountable absence, but I kept my

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

mouth shut. Then Sergeant Pirov began to get angry about it.

"That fellow Stassie has gone too far with his jokes this time!" he threatened. "I'll report him if it costs him his life. Absence without leave don't mean nothing to him at all. Who's going to take care of his mount, eh? I ain't, I know that."

"I'll take care of Stassie's horse, sergeant," I volunteered. "I guess he must have met with an accident somewhere, or something."

"Well, he'll meet with something worse than an accident when he gets back, I'm telling you. He's gone far enough and I ain't going to stand for it!"

At nightfall we were ordered to leave the estate. As I saddled my horse I wondered how I was going to cover Stassie's absence and at the same time arrange so that when he returned to the estate he would know where we had gone. I figured it could not be done, and so I went to Lavronsev and reported that, while Stassie's horse was on hand, Stassie himself was absent.

"Something has undoubtedly detained him, *podporutchik*," I pointed out. "He may be back any moment. Will the *podporutchik* allow me to remain behind to wait for him?"

"No, Iogolevitch, you'll do no such thing. Stanislav will have to take care of himself. You'll march with the rest of your company!"

## ON PATROL

I didn't ride with the rest of the company! Instead, I rode off to a far corner of the estate, and when the signal came to assemble I remained where I was. I had found out where the company was headed for, and I was in hopes that Stassie would return in time to allow us to overtake it before it had gotten very far.

After the regiment was out of the estate I returned to the stable to keep company with Stassie's mount and Waskia, my own. It was mighty monotonous waiting. As the hours went by Stassie's mare—he had named her Paula, after me—became restless, and, knowing the intuition of animals, I got the feeling that something had happened to her master.

"Do you think your crazy master has gone away for good, Paula?" I argued with her. "Do you think he has deserted us and will never come back to make us laugh at his silly jokes? No such luck, Paula, no such luck!"

But what if Stassie should not come back? The thought filled me with terror and sent cold chills down my spine. That would be a blow I could not endure. Brave Stassie! Kind Stassie! Strong Stassie! What a lot I owed him! Stassie not come back!

The fact that the estate might now be entered by German patrols, who were probably aware that our regiment had left it, presented itself to me as a strong possibility. I decided to

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

saddle the horses and get them ready for a quick get-away if the necessity for sudden flight should arise. Then I lay down and waited.

It was no use trying to sleep, I could not close my eyes until they had once again set on Stassie. All through the night I kept my lonely vigil—I and the two horses.

When morning came I took care of the horses, ate some black bread for my breakfast, and then climbed a high tree to watch for Stassie.

It must have been about seven o'clock when I observed three Germans suddenly emerge from behind a clump of trees. They were apparently running toward me. I reached for my rifle, which was slung across my shoulders. It would have been a simple matter for me to have picked off the three Huns, but I did not know how many more of them were behind the clump of trees. The wiser policy seemed to be to jump from the tree, mount my horse, and gallop off before they had a chance to fire on me.

I was still debating which was the better course to follow when I noticed that the Germans were advancing toward me in a most unusual manner. Closer observation revealed that the reason for the peculiar gyrations they were exhibiting was—Stassie! There was no mistaking his tall, slim figure. With a revolver in each hand he was covering the three Huns, and to let them know that he was right behind them

## ON PATROL

he kept hitting first one and then the other across the back of the neck—a program which fully accounted for the peculiar steps of his prisoners.

I jumped from the tree without further hesitation and hastened forward to relieve Stassie of one of his prisoners. We lined them up against a tree with hands upraised, and while I kept them covered Stassie went through their pockets. Every good find he registered with a blow, and I know that all the time he was thinking of our poor comrades who had suffered so terribly at the hands of the Huns two days before.

Then we tied the three of them together, hands downward, and, keeping them between our horses, started off to rejoin our regiment. Not a word could I get out of Stassie as to how he had come to make the capture, nor did he ever explain it to me.

As we rode along slowly, retarded by our prisoners, Stassie burst into some impromptu lines to the following effect:

“Three Huns captured  
Means three Huns more,  
Three more hungry mouths to feed  
Than we had before.  
Think we better let them go;  
We don’t really need them.  
Capture is too good for them.  
I’d rather fight than feed them ”

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

Nevertheless, we did not release our prisoners, but delivered them proudly to Captain Solntsef, and we got a severe reprimand for our pains. In the army, as I had long since found out, the end does not justify the means, and we were warned by our commander that we were to be severely dealt with because of our absence without leave.

Although the captain offered Stassie no word of praise for his remarkable capture, our comrades, whom we found in the stable, were more appreciative. They made him tell over and over again how he had brought his prisoners in, but he wouldn't disclose how he happened to capture them in the first place.

Our horses put to rest, we decided to take some ourselves. We certainly needed it. After the sleepless night I had spent I was about all in, and Stassie was in no better condition.

Unfortunately, however, our officers did not see that we were entitled to any particular consideration. We had been absent without leave, and they were going to make us suffer for it.

Just as we were about to turn in the *podporuchik* entered our hut and ordered Stassie and me to join several others of our men and proceed with them to a post on the banks of a river some fifteen miles away from our quarters.

"You will leave your horses behind!" he added.

## ON PATROL

The fifteen miles' trudge took us several hours. When we reached the point designated we found a row of huts about one hundred and fifty yards our side of the river.

As the Germans were in possession of an estate on the opposite bank of the river, we felt that these huts would make an ideal stronghold for us, but as we entered one of them a shot came through the wall—not from the other side of the river, but from the direction of a woodpile on *our* side.

Evidently the Huns were on *both* sides of the river. It was necessary for us to keep constant watch, although it was a case of listening rather than watching, because of the blackness of the night.

When daylight came we shifted our position to the hut nearest the woodpile, two of us remaining on guard at the window all day long, relieving each other at half-hour intervals.

There were several opportunities during the day for us to pick off careless Huns who from time to time exposed themselves in the vicinity of the woodpile, but our orders were to *watch* the enemy, not to harass him. Nevertheless, it was mighty hard to resist the temptation to fire on the easy target which the Huns provided at three hundred yards.

All we had to eat that day was the reserve bread we carried in our pockets, and when night

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

came we felt pretty miserable. It was useless to maintain a watch at the window at night, and so we took it in turns to crawl to a point within one hundred yards of the woodpile, from which vantage-point we were in a better position to hear what was going on. A heavy rain had begun to fall and the ground was soaked through, which made our task particularly disagreeable; and we waited impatiently for the morning, when we expected to be relieved.

Morning came at last, but the relief didn't.

"It's all right for them to starve you and Stassie to death for absence without leave," one of our comrades complained, "but why should they hand it to the rest of us?"

There was logic in that, but none of us could supply the answer. Our clothes wet and our stomachs empty, we were in pretty bad shape. Our morale was at a low ebb. If the Huns had surrounded us at that time, I think we would have surrendered without much of a fight. Human nature is human nature, and when you're hungry and cold and dead for sleep, and on top of it all you feel that you are being treated unjustly, your patriotism does get a severe jolt, and it is just as well to admit it.

"In one of these huts there must be potatoes or something," one of the men suggested. "The poor fellows who abandoned them when the Huns made things too hot for them couldn't

## ON PATROL

possibly have taken *everything* with them. Isn't it worth while doing some foraging?"

The idea struck me as being a good one, and I volunteered to strip off my uniform and, in my sailor-suit, make my way through the forest to a hut on the other side of the woodpile which seemed to be less dilapidated than the ones we were occupying, and, besides, had a promising sort of outhouse such as is usually employed for the storage of grain, vegetables, and other supplies.

I put my plan into action at once, feeling that if I fell into the hands of Hun patrols I might possibly pass myself off as a Russian civilian and be allowed to go unmolested.

I reached the vegetable-shed without incident and in one corner of it I ran across a stack of potatoes. My pockets were neither large enough nor secure enough to hold the precious treasure. They were full of holes. Somewhere in the place, however, I hoped to find a sack or a piece of cloth which I could turn into a bag.

Near the door I thought I saw something of the kind and walked toward it. As I did so, I observed a form moving through the forest in my direction.

My heart jumped to my throat. I was unarmed and weak from hunger, and even if the man in the forest were similarly unequipped, in my present condition I would be unable to put up much of a fight.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

Leaning against the wall was the handle of a dilapidated shovel. It looked hefty and I seized it. It was better than nothing. Then, pushing open the door of the hut, I entered and waited for the Hun to follow me—for I felt sure that the advancing figure was that of a German patrol.

Through the crack of the door, where it swung upon its hinges, I could see the man advancing, and, as he cleared the woods, I saw that he was indeed a German soldier! He came toward the hut cautiously, but I expected him at any moment to rush the place and, with revolver in hand, demand my surrender.

I was mistaken. He walked right past the door and made for an adjoining hut, which he entered.

With a sigh of relief, I put down the shovel-handle and decided to get away as fast as I could, carrying as many of the potatoes as my blouse would hold, but just as I was about to carry this plan into execution it occurred to me that the Hun might have passed right by merely as a ruse to get me to come out, and that as soon as I crossed the threshold a shot from his revolver might welcome me. The best thing to do was to stand pat.

A moment later I saw a movement at the skylight of the hut which the German had entered. There came a red flash as though some one were

AS I SNATCHED IT FROM THE TABLE I DETECTED A STRANGE MOVEMENT OF THE OTHER TABLE-CLOTH



## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

signaling from it. This was repeated several times, and then the door of the hut opened and the Hun came out.

Again I grabbed the shovel-handle, but the man made direct for the forest, and, after waiting for five or six minutes, I decided it was safe for me to resume my search for a sack in which to carry back a supply of the much-needed potatoes which I knew my comrades were anxiously awaiting.

The ground floor of the hut in which I had taken refuge was in the usual state of disorder that we found whenever we entered these places. Not finding what I wanted there, I turned toward a flight of stairs which led to a second story or attic, and decided, although not without some misgivings, to go up and explore.

It was dark, and I lighted a match to see where I was going. At the head of the stairs there was a large room. In it I saw two tables, each covered with a cloth. There was the very thing I wanted—one of those table-cloths! As I snatched it from the table I detected a strange movement of the other table-cloth, as though there were some one hiding under it!

Without further investigation I sprang for the door and flew down the stairs, my speed hastened by a terrifying sight that met my eyes. The stairs were in flames! The match I had lighted and thrown away had evidently fallen upon a

## ON PATROL

pile of rubbish at the foot of the staircase and the woodwork was now ablaze and smoke was spreading through the place.

Just as I reached the door I heard footsteps above, then a few muttered curses, and the next moment I was down in a heap. Some one had jumped the full flight of stairs and landed upon my back. I felt the powerful grasp of a strong hand at my throat and everything turned black.

Something burning fell on my cheek, and then my assailant loosened his grip, and as I opened my eyes I saw him jump for the door, his hair a mass of flames!

Bursting through the door, I blew my scout-whistle as loud as I could. A single blast was our signal to shoot at whatever target presented itself. Instantly I heard shots from various directions. Evidently our men as well as the Germans across the river were blazing away blindly as a result of my signal.

Shots were coming in my direction and I crawled along the ground to escape them. Coming to a brick well, I knelt behind it for a moment's rest, but the bricks were loose and my weight was too much for them. Splash I went down the well!

Fortunately the well was not more than eight or nine feet deep, with only three or four feet of water in it, but the cement sides were so slimy that, try as I might, I could not get out.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

I blew my whistle as loud as I could, hoping that my comrades would find some way of locating me, for it was quite clear to me that without outside help I would drown like a rat in this dirty well!

I must have been in the well about four hours when I heard voices above me. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon and already dark. I was not sure whether the voices came from friend or foe, but capture by the Germans would be better than the slow death which must inevitably be my doom if I remained in the well, and, deciding to take a chance, I blew my whistle with all the strength I could summon.

A moment later a voice from the top of the well called to me in Russian: "Don't worry, Paul. We'll have you out in a jiffy!"

A moment or two later I was being hauled to the top by means of a rope which had been lowered to me. There I found myself in the hands of men from our third company, who explained that they had relieved my own comrades at noon and had been told of the mission upon which I had departed and from which I had not returned.

I was taken back to the hut which our men were occupying and given some hot tea and bread, and while I was eating and drinking I learned that the blast from my whistle had precipitated a hot fight between our men and the

## ON PATROL

German patrols, and that the Huns had been forced to flee across the river. The man who had fled from the hut with his hair afire, they told me, had made a plain target and had been shot. On his body they had found notes regarding our forces and a map of the surrounding country, indicating that he was a German spy.

After I was through with my meal I told the men about the potatoes which nearly cost me my life, and a couple of men were sent to the shed to get a supply of them. The potatoes they brought back were cooked! The fire from the hut had spread to the shed and burned it to the ground, and while some of the potatoes were burned to a crisp, others were just cooked right, and they tasted wonderfully good to us.

Later the men from my company returned from a search they had been making for me in the woods. When they saw me, attired again in my uniform and apparently none the worse for my experience, they could hardly believe their eyes.

"What kind of trick is this you've played on us, you young scoundrel?" shouted Stassie, trying to look angry, but unable to conceal the pleasure he apparently felt at finding me safe and sound. "Here we've wasted our relief-hours searching the forest with a magnifying-glass for you, and you're here all the time feeding your face! Holy Peter! I've a good

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

mind to brain you—but before I do tell me what happened to you!"

Again I told my day's adventures, and then I retired to a corner of the hut and tried to get some sleep, but the excitement of the day made it difficult.

The next morning our company was recalled to the regiment. We found the place completely intrenched and occupied by large forces of our infantry. We were getting ready, apparently, to attack the Germans across the river, and in the mean while there was very little for us to do.

We built camp-fires and had a real dinner, the regimental kitchen having arrived, and after our meal we each received a fresh supply of underwear which had come through from the Red Cross. It was the first chance we had had to change since we had left Urany!

As Stassie expressed it, "If we don't need the change, perhaps the vermin do!"

# X

## THE BATTLE OF SAVENDIKI

AT midnight we were aroused and ordered to saddle our horses and prepare for a march. We started off in the direction of Shavli.

After some three or four hours' ride we came to an estate about two miles from a river. Between the estate and the river was a village. Our regimental headquarters was established in the estate, and after putting up our horses in the estate stables we were ordered to continue, on foot, to the village, where we were to relieve the infantry force stationed there.

As we marched along, our engineers unwound telephone wires, stringing them along the road so that we would have direct communication with our headquarters.

The village was surrounded by trenches, and we learned from some of the infantrymen whom we relieved that directly across the river was the village of Savendiki, which was held by a strong force of Germans. The Huns were maintaining a heavy guard along their side of the river.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

Captain Panunsev was in charge of our four squadrons, the colonel having remained on the estate.

As soon as we arrived in the village half of our men were sent into the trenches, the others remaining in reserve. Stassie was among the latter. I was detailed as the captain's aide. The hut he selected as his headquarters was right in front of a cemetery.

All day long I had a feeling of impending danger. There was little or no firing on either side, but the air was tense and something told me that trouble was in the wind. In the evening when the watch was changed I accompanied the captain on a tour of the trenches, and he warned all the officers and men to keep on the alert. Whether or not he had information that the Huns were planning an attack or he planned to cross the river and attack them during the night, I don't know, but it was quite evident to me that something was brewing.

When we got back to the hut my suspicions were confirmed.

"Better not remove your uniform, Iogolevitch," the captain suggested, as I was about to turn in for the night. "We may be called suddenly in the night and there won't be time to dress!"

Then he flung himself down on the cot that had been provided for him, and I followed his example.

## THE BATTLE OF SAVENDIKI

Why didn't he tell me what was in store for us? If a battle was scheduled for the night, why couldn't he give me at least an hour or two to think about it? These were the questions that I turned over and over in my mind as I lay on my cot. I knew how necessary it was to guard military information of this character, lest by some underground channel it leaked through to the enemy, but I couldn't help feeling a little hurt that I, the captain's aide, had not been taken into his confidence. Still nursing this unwarranted grievance, I fell off to sleep.

It must have been several hours later when I was awakened by a crash at our door, followed almost instantly by the sound of bullets striking the wall of the hut. Panunsev and I both scrambled from our cots and lay flat on the floor. The next second a bullet came crashing through the window and, passing over the cot upon which the captain had been sleeping, plowed through the opposite wall. Had it arrived a second or two earlier it would undoubtedly have accounted for the captain!

We crawled to the door, opened it, and got out. Our men in the village were established on the roofs of the huts and were maintaining a hot fire against the Huns across the river, and the activity in our trenches was very heavy.

"They're using four or five machine-guns!" the captain asserted. "Get back to our room,

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

Iogolevitch, and get my revolver and your piece!"

I sprang into the hut and reached for the revolver that was lying on the table. As I grasped it, a bullet came through the window and shot into smithereens a glass which had been standing right next to the captain's pistol.

Hastening back to Panunsev, I handed him his revolver and stood by his side in the lee of the hut. Two of our men came running toward us, bending so low that they passed right by us.

"Where're you going, there!" yelled the captain. "Turn back!"

Above the banging of the rifles and machine-guns, the men heard the captain's order and wheeled around.

"We're being attacked, captain, by a force three times as large as ours!" one of the men reported, breathlessly. "Podporutchik Lavronsev awaits your orders!"

"Tell the *podporutchik* to hold the position at all costs! I will send reinforcements!" And then he directed me to pick up as many of the men who were shooting from the roof-tops as I could and send them forward to report to the *podporutchik* in the trenches. Then I was to report to the captain at once at the hut at the extreme end of the village—which was the nearest building to the trenches.

I started off excitedly on my mission. I

## THE BATTLE OF SAVENDIKI

realized that serious work was ahead of me this night, and I was inwardly praying that I might prove equal to it.

Having sent forward some twenty-five men, I made my way to the captain. He was lying prone at the spot he had indicated, studying the German front through his glasses, but, while day was beginning to break, it was still too dark to see very far. Across the river, with my naked eye, I could see a black mass, and I took that as my target as I lay down beside the captain and started pounding away with my carbine.

"Take this to the telephone-operator," the captain ordered, handing me a message that he had scribbled on a piece of paper.

I put up my gun and hurried to the hut where the operator was stationed. I found him on the floor, with the receiver at his ear, writing down a message that was coming through. I gave him my message and he told me that he had just sent a messenger to the captain.

When I got back the captain was talking to an officer and four men from another squadron. He seemed nervous and felt in his pockets for a cigarette.

"Go back to my hut and get my cigarettes and matches," he commanded as I came up. "I must have left them on the table."

Remembering my narrow escape when I re-

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

turned to the hut before for his revolver, I thought it extremely unreasonable for him to subject me to this unnecessary danger for the sake of a cigarette, but of course I did as I was bid. Bending low, I reached the hut in safety, although a number of bullets struck the place while I was in it.

When I got back word came that our machine-gun fire from the estates was not reaching the enemy.

"Telephone headquarters that the machine-gunned are shooting short!" he yelled, and when I reached the operator, thinking to save time, I grabbed the instrument from his hand and shouted the captain's message through, and before the startled operator could protest I was on my way back.

A quarter of an hour later we received word that the men in the trenches had ammunition enough to last but another half-hour, and we sent word to our headquarters to rush a further supply to us.

Just then I noticed an officer on his way toward us. He was bending low, but when he was within a few feet of us a bullet caught him in the back and he dropped. His body contracted convulsively, his hands clutched at his breast, and he uttered some queer sounds. We sprang toward him and dragged him to our position in the shelter of the house. He was trying to say

## THE BATTLE OF SAVENDIKI

something, but couldn't talk. With an effort that seemed to cause him excruciating agony he raised his arm and pointed to one side. Looking in the direction he indicated, we noticed a dark spot moving in the distance.

The captain caught up his field-glasses. "They are fresh forces!" he cried. "They're going to surround us." As he lowered his glass a volley of machine-gun bullets came from the new direction, and he directed me to notify headquarters and tell them to send forward some of their machine-guns.

I met the operator half-way. He was coming toward me as fast as he could run.

"The wires are cut! I can get no connection!" he shouted, excitedly.

I returned with him to the captain and delivered the bad news. Calling three soldiers, he ordered them to make their way as fast as they could to headquarters and deliver the message.

Ten minutes later one of them returned, saying that it was impossible to get through.

"The Huns are concentrating their fire on the road, captain," he explained. "My two companions fell. I thought it best to come back, because if I proceeded and got caught—which seemed inevitable—you would wait in vain for the machine-guns! A number of our men carrying ammunition were lying dead on the road."

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

"Curse the Huns! I'll make them pay two for one before I'm through!" the captain exclaimed.

"I'll get to headquarters, captain," I declared, stirred to action by the captain's vim, and, without waiting for his permission, I turned in the direction of the road, clenched my teeth, and started to run like a madman, not even taking the precaution to bend low. I figured that if I was doomed to get one of those bullets, bending low wouldn't save me, and I could make better time in a natural position. I didn't loiter on the way. There was a hot fire all along the road, but somehow I got through and delivered my message to headquarters. Sixty men and two machine-guns were immediately ordered to the village, and the other machine-guns were turned in the direction of the new enemy positions, which kept some of the German fire off the road.

As I hurried along I heard a cry from one of the men lying in the road. As I stooped down to him he pointed to a box of ammunition that he had been carrying to us when he was struck down.

"Finish the trip for me, boy!" he whispered. "I'm all in. Tell the *porutchik* I—did—my—best—but—" A fit of coughing prevented him from finishing the sentence. I turned him over to free his throat from some of the blood that

## THE BATTLE OF SAVENDIKI

was clogging it, and at that very moment a bullet struck him in the face and finished him! I lay flat on the ground for a moment, stunned by the shock, and then I crept over to the box of bullets and started for the village, dragging the box after me.

As I reached the captain a sergeant was explaining that the enemy was evidently planning to surround not only the village, but the estate, too.

"Will the captain trust me with one hundred and fifty men and one machine-gun?" I ventured, an idea striking me as the sergeant finished his report. "I think I see a way out."

Much to my surprise, without even asking for particulars, the captain consented, and I ran to a trench which my own company was sharing with about a hundred men from other companies.

"We're in a bad fix, men," I yelled. "I have just come from headquarters. If we're willing to take a chance, though, I think we can save the regiment. Are you willing, men?"

Led by Stassie, who stopped firing long enough to hear what I had to say, they declared enthusiastically that they were ready for anything.

Sending ten men to the cemetery to get a machine-gun and as many bullet-ribbons as they could carry, I ran back to the captain and told him that in ten minutes he could order a retirement from the trenches to the estate,

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

When I returned to the trench the machine-gun had already been placed in position. Then I ordered the men to cease firing. A moment or two later came two shrill blasts from our commander's whistle, which was repeated by our lieutenants in all our trenches. At the signal our men left their trenches and made off in the direction of the estate—all except those who had volunteered to remain with me in the section of the line which it was my plan to hold.

As the enemy observed our men leaving the trenches in full retreat, they came over the top, crossed the river on pontoons, and made direct for our trenches. The route they selected was naturally one which subjected them to the least amount of fire from the estate, but it was directly in the line of fire from the trench which we still occupied and in which we were breathlessly biding our time.

Onward they came—a clear field apparently before them—their foe in full retreat. We waited until they were almost on top of us—until we could hear the shouts of their leaders, and then we let them have it! Our machine-gun and our rifles let out a burst of bullets that mowed down the onrushing Huns like wheat before the scythe! Those who, by some strange miracle, escaped our stream of lead realized that they had fallen into an ambush and beat a hasty retreat to their old positions. A moment or two

## THE BATTLE OF SAVENDIKI

later, however, after their leaders had apparently sized up our probable strength and come to the conclusion that we were merely fighting a rear-guard action, they came at us again.

This time they advanced more cautiously—running a few yards, then dropping to the ground and giving us a volley, and then rushing another few yards.

Again we waited for them and then let them have another withering fire. The line wavered for a moment and then came on. It was evident that they were determined to break through, irrespective of the cost, and, as they outnumbered us perhaps fifteen to one, I realized that we could not possibly hold them back if they were willing to pay the price. This time we lacked the advantage of surprise. The Huns knew exactly where we were located and what they had to expect from us. The Hun leaders never hesitated to sacrifice their men to gain an objective.

Such was my train of thought as I kept pounding away at the advancing line, and now, here they were!

As they neared our parapet it seemed that the whole German army was coming at us. Their leaders jumped feet foremost into our trench. They threw no grenades. Perhaps they figured they could just trample us to death! In the hand-to hand fighting that ensued our quar-

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

ters were so close that it was almost impossible to swing a rifle. It was a case of jab and stab, and our men were masters at that form of fighting.

We made it so hot for the Huns who were unfortunate enough to land in our trench, and our gunners wrought such execution among those who followed them, that after four or five minutes of the most ferocious fighting I had ever witnessed we had the satisfaction of seeing the enemy fall back a second time.

Our triumph, I realized, would be short-lived. It would be only a few minutes before the Huns, stung to madness by our resistance, would be at us again, and this time they would undoubtedly down us. We had already lost about one-third of our men, many of whom were lying in our trenches, dreadfully wounded, and our action had already achieved its purpose—the regiment had successfully reached the estate. The time had come to retire. That was the problem that now confronted me. To retreat all at once would have meant annihilation at the hands of the enemy, who were undoubtedly watching our every movement.

Ordering Stassie to retire with thirty men, I ordered our machine-gun and remaining rifles to keep up a constant fire to cover their retreat. It worked so well that a moment or two later, before the Huns could realize what we were at, I started thirty more men off.

## THE BATTLE OF SAVENDIKI

Then the Huns woke up. Again they started for us—this time seeking little cover and coming right at their goal. They realized, of course, that if they didn't get to us quickly they would find an empty trench when they arrived.

Our machine-gun was put out of action, and our rifle-fire was too thin to make any impression on the advancing ranks.

"Cease firing and run for your lives!" I shouted, jumping out of the trench and heading in the direction of the estate.

There were about thirty of us when we started, but our numbers dwindled every moment, one falling after another. We were nearly through the village when I saw that we would inevitably be overtaken before we could reach the estate, and I darted into the last hut in the village street and was followed by the rest of my little force—now reduced to seventeen, including myself, most of them more or less wounded.

We slammed the door shut and hastily examined what we fully believed would prove our slaughter-house. The Huns were almost on our heels and there didn't seem to be a chance in the world that we should ever emerge from our place of temporary refuge.

Breathless, covered with dirt, smoke, and blood, which made our tense faces appear ghastly, desperate—many of us smarting from wounds which up till then we had been unable

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

even to examine—we were, nevertheless, determined to fight to the last. I heard not a suggestion of despair or discouragement. Brave *muzhiks*, they were unmindful of pain and they had no fear of death!

“Look here!” shouted one of them, pointing to a trap-door in the center of the floor and proceeding to open it. Without loss of time, we tumbled down the stairs, which led to the cellar, and pulled the trap-door shut over us.

Some one lit a match and, in the corner of the cellar, sitting on a barrel, the flicker revealed an old man with a long white beard.

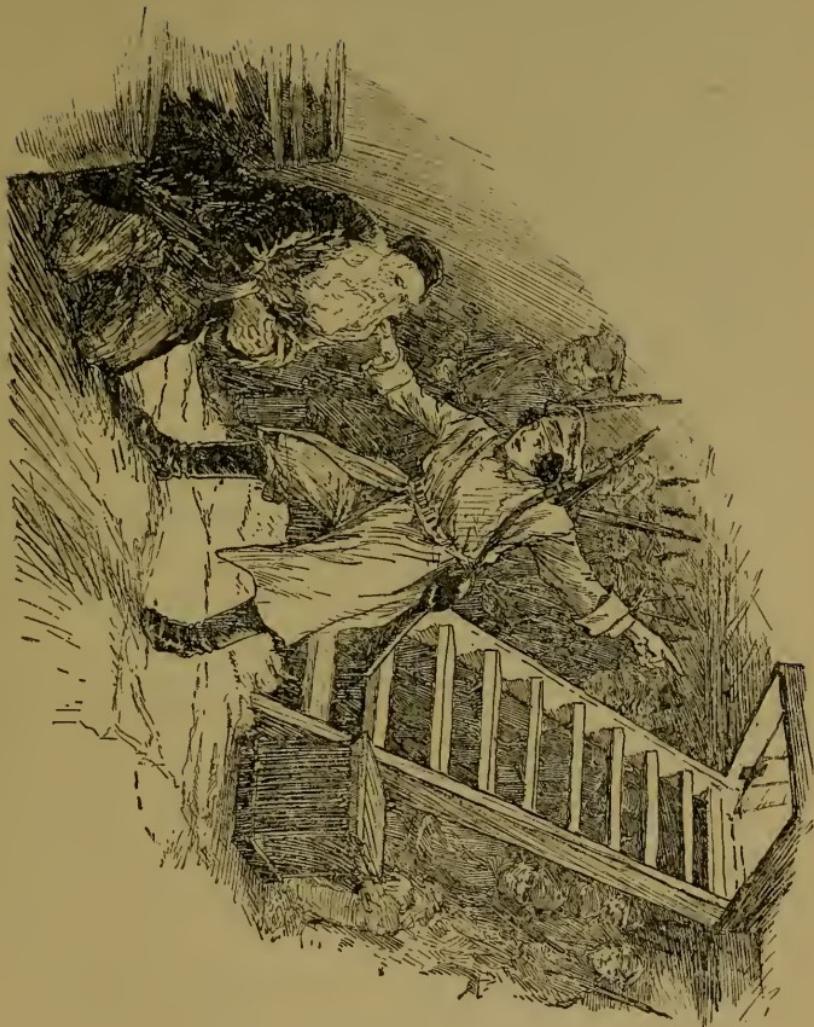
I rushed over to him and shook him by the shoulder to bring him to his senses. He seemed completely dazed. I spoke to him in Russian and then in German without getting any response. Then I tried a Jewish jargon, and he revealed that he was the owner of the hut and had hid himself in the cellar as soon as the battle started.

“Go up-stairs and wait until the Germans come!” I ordered.

If I had threatened to deliver him over to the enemy for execution he could not have displayed more alarm. Falling upon his knees, he pleaded for mercy.

“Get up!” I commanded, “and do what I tell you! If the Huns find you up-stairs, where you ought to be, they won’t hurt you, but if

"GO UP-STAIRS AND WAIT UNTIL THE GERMANS COME!" I ORDERED



## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

they search the place and find you down here with us, we'll all be massacred together! Hurry now, and do all you can to keep them from coming down here!"

Trembling all over, the old man climbed the creaking stairs and promised to do his best.

It must have been nearly half an hour later when we heard heavy footsteps above, as though a crowd of men had entered the place. There were loud, stern voices, to which we heard the thin, frightened voice of the old Jew replying.

With bayonets and revolvers directed against the trap-door, we waited breathlessly the result of the old man's diplomacy—or treachery—we did not know which to expect—and then, to our intense relief, we heard the intruders leave the hut. The old man had played square!

There was quiet above for a little while and then the trap-door opened and the old man threw us down some bread and a leather portfolio which one of the German officers had evidently left in the room. It was full of maps and papers, including a Russian map showing the disposition of our forces in this section of the front, and a partially completed translation of it. I confiscated the papers, and when the old man opened the door again and whispered that there was one German patrolling the house and the whole village was guarded by the Huns, we

## THE BATTLE OF SAVENDIKI

decided to take a chance in the darkness—it was now dusk—and make for the estate.

We crept quietly up the stairs and got out of the back of the house without attracting the attention of the patrol in front.

Proceeding cautiously through the vegetable-garden in the rear of the house, half of us had succeeded in getting through the rear fence when our blood froze in our veins at the order, in German:

“Halt! Who goes there!”

Again the challenge broke the silence of the night.

This time I had found my voice, and, in as stern a tone as I could command, I answered, in German:

“Don’t yell! Ours!”

The next second a light flashed in my face, but before the Hun who held it could even think, two of our men had jumped at his throat, thrown him to the ground and disposed of him, with hardly a sound.

Another voice yelled, “Halt!” and there came a shot.

That was our cue. We jumped and ran—ran faster than any of us had ever run before. A rocket flared up and bullets came whizzing all around us. I made in the direction of the forest. Right by my side was one of our men who had been shot in the arm and shoulder. We got to

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

the woods and waited for the others to join us, and then we discovered that we two were apparently the only ones who had escaped!

Realizing that we were now safe, I opened my companion's coat, used his shirt as a bandage, and tied up his wounds. It was useless to attempt to find our way through the woods in the darkness, and Petroff, my companion, was badly in need of rest, so we picked out a suitable spot and threw ourselves down for a few hours' sleep.

During the night I heard heavy firing, but I paid no attention to it. I was too tired to care very much what it signified. Before I finally closed my eyes in slumber I thanked God for the favor He had shown me in those past twenty-four hours of strife and death. All around me my comrades had been falling, wounded or killed, and I, exposed to precisely the same dangers, had escaped unscathed! One such experience in a lifetime is enough to convince any one of the inscrutability of the workings of Fate!

At daybreak I aroused Petroff and we started through the forest in the direction of our forces. His wounds required attention, I knew. He was feverish, and I feared that blood-poisoning would set in if we did not get medical treatment soon. As we plugged along, my mud-covered shoes caught my eye—the shoes of poor Kuzmov which were supposed to keep me out of danger.

## THE BATTLE OF SAVENDIKI

I could not help smiling at the silly superstition of the simple-minded *muzhiks*—but at any rate, here I was safe and—

Crash! A shot plowed through the trees, right past my face.

“Stand where you are, Petroff!” I commanded to my wounded companion. “This must be some fool sentry’s shot! Surely we cannot be within range of the enemy!”

And then, from out the woods, a Russian soldier, with rifle raised, revealed himself.

“You crazy idiot!” I shouted. “Why don’t you challenge before you fire! If it were not for these lucky shoes I’m wearing you would have killed one of your own comrades!”

The man was so upset at the tragedy he had so nearly brought about that I decided his carelessness had been punished sufficiently and decided to say nothing further about the incident, cautioning Petroff against reporting it, either. The sentry then summoned the guard and we were conducted to the headquarters of the regiment—which wasn’t ours—and from there we were escorted to our own organization.

Captain Panunsev greeted me most effusively. He shook my hand and insisted that I had made a sad mess of the whole thing—which, I knew, was his way of complimenting me—and I felt as proud as a peacock. Then some more officers came around and started to question me until

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

I had told the whole story about half a dozen times.

Handing the maps to the captain, I asked where I could find Stassie and the rest of the company, and, being directed to a stable where our company was quartered, I made my way there without further loss of time, Petroff, in the mean while, having been turned over to the medical department.

"Hello, deserter!" shouted Stassie, jumping eagerly toward me as I entered the stable and shaking my hand so vigorously that I had to smash him in the chin with my free hand in order to make him let go. "Now tell us what happened after *we* cleared the way for the rest of you to escape!" -

I laughed at Stassie's way of putting it, and then told them the story.

"I'm afraid that Petroff and I were the only ones who escaped alive," I concluded. "And yet some of the boys may even now be alive and suffering somewhere between that hut and the woods. It seems to me we ought to try to get the village back, and I'm—"

"Try to get the village back!" Stassie repeated. "Why, we took it during the night—and not only that—we drove the Huns back across the river!"

Just then Podporutchik Lavronsev came in and reported that five of the men who had

## THE BATTLE OF SAVENDIKI

escaped from the cellar with me had been picked up wounded, but that the other ten must have been killed.

After we had had breakfast we were lined up in front of the stable, and Captain Panunsev announced that he was going to recommend me for the St. George war-cross. The soldiers cheered and I felt so happy I could hardly hold myself, but there was no time to celebrate. About one hundred and fifty prisoners had to be conducted to an adjoining camp, and we were ordered to escort them.

We formed them in line at once and started off with them. Most of them were dirty and ragged, their feet coming through their shoes. Some wore helmets, others wore only caps. Among them were four officers, who presented a somewhat better appearance.

Stassie was so elated at the news that I was to receive a war-cross that he could not forbear telling the prisoners all about it, pointing to me and cutting a cross in the air with his saber.

As he spoke in Russian and his gestures were not particularly illuminating, the Germans looked very dubious, imagining, undoubtedly, that the cross he was trying to describe meant that they were to be crucified and that I was to be their executioner—a fate which, many of them had possibly heard, was regularly meted out to German prisoners by the Russians!

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

To reassure them I explained in German what Stassie was saying in Russian. Hearing me talk German always made Stassie mad—not because he hated the Huns any more than I did, but because he always imagined that I was saying something at his expense. And so he started off at a new tangent, declaring that the captain had made a slight error in the announcement, having meant to name him, Stassie, for the war-cross instead of me, and he asked one of the prisoners to confirm this, pinching the poor devil by the back of the neck to make him nod his head affirmatively.

Delivering our prisoners to an infantry outfit, we returned to our quarters. There Podporutchik Lavronsev handed me an old violin which some one had secured. It had but two strings and the bow was old, but still I was able to get enough out of it to amuse the men.

In the evening I had to carry a message to Colonel Karpovitch, whose headquarters were now established in the village from which we had been forced to retreat the night before, but which our regiment had afterward recaptured. At Lavronsev's suggestion, I took along my violin. At the colonel's invitation, I played one or two selections, and he was so pleased that he asked me to join his staff at tea.

During the meal the colonel announced that he had received orders from the headquarters

## THE BATTLE OF SAVENDIKI

of the corps to cross the river and occupy the village of Savendiki.

"We're going to give them a little of their own medicine," he commented. "There's only one thing that disturbs me: our aviators report that the entire village is surrounded by heavy artillery, which is cleverly camouflaged. I'd give five years of my life to learn how they ever succeeded in getting their big guns through this muddy country and why, having got them in place, they haven't let us smell their powder!"

"Perhaps they're running shy of ammunition for the big guns, colonel?" suggested one of the officers. "The situation on the western front may be such that they have decided to concentrate all their resources against our allies."

"I don't know what the reason is," the colonel repeated, "but I'd very much like to find out. All the scouts I have assigned to the task have been baffled by the trenches which surround the village, and I confess I don't like the idea of crossing the river in the face of those heavy guns, which have probably been reserved for just such an attack as I contemplate."

"Will the colonel assign me to get the information desired?" I volunteered, impulsively. "In civilian clothes, which I wear under my uniform, carrying my violin, I might possibly be able to get into Savendiki as a civilian, secure

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

the necessary information, and get back to our lines again without a scratch?"

"That's a great idea, Iogolevitch!" the colonel replied, enthusiastically. "I don't think it would be quite as simple a matter as you seem to think—there would be grave danger—but if you are willing to undertake the task I will give my consent, and if you come back alive, with or without the information I want, you won't regret it!"

I was instructed to stay at headquarters that night and in the morning to report to the colonel for final instructions before starting off on my mission.

What new dangers I had brought upon myself by my impulsive offer I could not foresee, but that night, before sleep claimed me, I thanked God for this new opportunity that had come to me to serve Russia. If my mission succeeded it would show my fellow-countrymen what a Jewish boy could achieve for his country. If it failed, it would demonstrate that when his country called, a Jewish boy was not afraid to die!

## XI

### WHEELLESS WAGONS AND FIRELESS GUNS

EARLY next morning, attired in my sailor-suit and a hat which some one had procured for me in the village and which looked more like a lady's bonnet than a boy's cap, I reported at the colonel's quarters. After a short wait I was ordered inside and was given full instructions as to what information would prove most valuable to our forces if I succeeded in getting behind the enemy's lines.

Then, with my violin in its case under my arm, I started down the road in the direction of the river. I passed through our trenches—word having been given that I was to be allowed to pass unmolested—and then I followed a road which led to a bridge over the river. This bridge was in the possession of the enemy, and I knew it would be heavily patrolled, as it led to the heart of the village of Savendiki.

As I neared the bridge I strolled along slowly, endeavoring to appear as unconcerned as pos-

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

sible, although the early prospect of close contact with German sentries filled me with dread.

I sat down by the side of the road and, taking out my violin, I played for ten or fifteen minutes as though I were just amusing myself.

Then I put my violin back in its case, got up, and walked straight toward the bridge. My heart was beating furiously, try as I could to remain calm, but I whistled lightly as I approached the German soldiers, whom I could now clearly see and whose bayoneted guns looked more and more forbidding as I neared them.

"Halt! Put your box down and your hands up!" commanded one of the two soldiers who advanced toward me. They spoke in German, but it was part of my plan to disclose that I understood their language, and I complied at once, much to their surprise.

One of the soldiers grasped my upturned arms by the wrists and started to question me, while the other pointed his gun at me threateningly.

"I am on my way to Savendiki," I explained, in German. "I am a poor boy and I want to earn some money in the village by playing my violin. That is how I earn my living!"

"Open that box, then, and let us see what's in it!" one of the men ordered, releasing my hands and holding his bayonet at my side as I

## WHEELLESS WAGONS AND FIRELESS GUNS

stooped to comply. I opened the box, took out the violin and showed it to them, turning it on all sides to convince them that it was indeed a musical instrument and not a camouflaged cannon or airplane; but even then they were not



"I AM A POOR BOY AND I WANT TO EARN SOME MONEY IN THE VILLAGE BY PLAYING MY VIOLIN"

quite satisfied and ordered me to play on it to prove that I was indeed a violinist.

I played a German song which I thought would be familiar to them. Never before had I realized what a great help it is to a musician to close his eyes while playing—but never before had I been compelled to play in such proximity to two glistening bayonets which threatened to explore my insides if I failed to satisfy my audience!

"Very good!" one of the men exclaimed, begrudgingly, and then turning to his comrade

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

and trying to show his knowledge of music, he added, "That boy has talent; if he studied and practised, he might really amount to something as a violinist some day!"

"Yes," I answered, feeling now a little relieved as I saw that I had "passed the examination," "I wouldn't be surprised if you heard of me again some day." I thought it rather likely that they would, although not as a violinist.

One of the men took my violin and, beckoning me to follow him, led me over the bridge. On the other side we met a young lieutenant and about fifteen soldiers. My escort explained to the officer about me, and he ordered me to take my violin and accompany him. He started off toward the village, telling the soldiers that he would return in an hour.

"I am very fond of music, young fellow!" the officer declared. "Now tell me, where did you study?"

I gave him a somewhat imaginative account of my musical career, stating that I had studied in Germany under a certain professor, a man whose name I knew, but whom I had never even met.

"Oh yes," the officer replied, "I know the professor very well. When did you see him last?"

That was a bombshell! It scared me so much that I quickly changed the subject and man-

## WHEELLESS WAGONS AND FIRELESS GUNS

aged, very luckily, to get out of a difficult situation which I had gotten into quite unnecessarily. It taught me to be more careful in my answers thereafter.

We passed patrols all along the village streets, but I did not notice many soldiers off duty. The officer led me into a hut, which seemed to be the most pretentious in the village, and as he entered the room some soldiers who were sitting there jumped up and saluted him.

"Tell the colonel I would like to see him as soon as convenient," he ordered, and one of the men disappeared into an adjoining room and reappeared a few moments later with word that the lieutenant should go right in. I was told to wait until I was called, and, after a minute or two, a soldier came out and told me to follow him.

He led me through two offices, in one of which were a number of telephone operators, and then we came to the colonel's room.

He was a stout man, with straight red hair, a red mustache, pale skin, and small eyes which looked green, although they might have been blue and got their greenish hue from their proximity to the flaming mustache.

For a moment or two he paid no attention to me, and then, looking up suddenly, he ordered me in a stern voice to approach him. The various questions he asked me I answered along

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

the lines I had previously decided upon, the key-note of which was to tell the truth as long as it was not absolutely dangerous. Truth is always consistent. As long as I stuck to the facts I would not have to charge my memory with my answers to guard against subsequent conflicting statements. It was only when I lied—as I had unnecessarily in the case of the German professor—that I made the way hard for myself, but a certain amount of lying was, of course, essential in this case.

"I expected to earn some money in Savendiki, but now I see the place is in possession of Germans, I suppose I shall have to continue on my wanderings—unless," I added, as an after-thought—"unless Herr Colonel would care to have me play for his staff at mess?"

The colonel whispered to the lieutenant, whom he addressed as "Gross," and then declared that he would give me a chance to play for his officers, and in return would give me board and lodging in the village.

The lieutenant then motioned to me to go with him, and as we walked out into the street he told me that I could stay in his hut.

When we reached it he told me to make myself at home. The home consisted of two rooms, one of which served as kitchen, dining-room, and bedroom, while the other was apparently used as a bedroom only. In the former, at the stove,

## WHEELLESS WAGONS AND FIRELESS GUNS

stood a Russian girl of about seventeen or eighteen years of age.

"I thought officers in the army had *men* for servants?" I remarked, trying to appear ignorant of the situation.

"Yes," he replied, "we have to content ourselves with men most of the time, but you see I am luckier!" and he smiled significantly to the girl, who, if she understood what he said, certainly did not seem to share his satisfaction. "And now I've got to return to my guard. You can stay here or go out in the village, whichever you like, but don't go beyond the village limits."

Shortly after he left I decided to explore the place. Colonel Karpovitch had told me that even if I could not get close enough to the big guns to ascertain their size, I would probably be able to observe the kind of ammunition that was being used for them, and by measuring the shells I would know exactly the bore of the guns.

I walked from one end of the village to the other, but nowhere did I see the piles of reserve shells that the colonel was so certain I would encounter. Neither did I observe any artilleryman from whom I had hoped I might be able to wean some of the desired information. All the soldiers I saw seemed to be infantrymen or cavalrymen.

Thinking that the shells were possibly stored between the village and the river, I ventured

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

in the direction of the trenches, but I was stopped by an officer and made to turn back. On my way back to Lieutenant Gross's quarters, which I reached by way of a street I had not gone through before, I noticed a number of wagons and farm trucks lying on the ground. None of them had wheels. This fact did not then strike me as having any particular significance, but later it set me thinking.

During the midday meal, which I shared with the lieutenant in his hut, and from the taste of which I inferred that his cook was anything but a willing servant, I asked him carelessly the meaning of so many trucks without wheels, but the suspicious look he gave me warned me not to repeat the question, which he had left unanswered, and I talked of something else.

"Some of your men are wonderful specimens," I declared, a little later, trying a new tack. "When I was out walking I saw some artillery-men who were more than six feet tall!"

"You didn't see any artillerymen," he answered, and then, catching himself, "that is to say, the men you saw were probably cavalrymen—we have some very big men in the cavalry."

Then I asked him what he would like me to play at mess that night, and whether I would be paid for my services. He said I would be paid all my services were worth and that he would select the program later on, and he went out.

## WHEELLESS WAGONS AND FIRELESS GUNS

A little later I heard the noise of an airplane overhead and went out to watch it. It was a Russian machine and dropped two bombs, just outside the village. For once I was glad that a Russian aviator had missed his mark. The Germans fired at the bomber with machine-guns and rifles, but did not use their artillery, and the aviator soon got beyond their range.

I went back and started to read a book, but soon fell asleep. I was awakened about four or five o'clock by Lieutenant Gross and ordered to accompany him to the "club."

The "club" occupied a small hut which we reached through darkened streets, the lieutenant using a flashlight from time to time to light our way. Although the interior of the club was well lighted, drawn shades prevented any of the light showing through the windows.

The dining-room was full of smoke, but when my eyes became used to it I observed that around the table there were seated about nine officers of various ranks. A moment later the colonel and his adjutant entered and every one stood up.

When they were all seated again the adjutant ordered me to start playing. There was so much noise—the clattering of dishes, the shifting of chairs, the conversation and laughter of the officers—that I don't believe they heard very much of my playing. That didn't annoy me

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

nearly as much, however, as the fact that the noise prevented my overhearing what they were all talking about, which I tried very hard to do.

The noise abated somewhat when the supper was over, and then among other scraps of conversation I overheard was a statement by one of the lieutenants to another to the effect that he had "made" eight guns more that day "on Section B."

The concert ended with the playing of the German anthem, which I celebrated by snapping one of my strings when I was half-way through. The officers completed the national air vocally, and I was not criticized for the "accident" to my violin.

As I lay in bed that night several questions kept bothering me. The lieutenant had referred to the fact that eight guns had been "made" that day. How was it possible in a small village like Savendiki to manufacture big guns? Why had I seen no artillerymen? Why had the Russian airplane been greeted with rifle-fire only? What was the meaning of those wagons without wheels? Why had I been unable to discover any ammunition for the big guns?

"There's something mighty mysterious about those big guns, that's sure," I concluded, "and to-morrow I will take a look at them, cost what it may!"

Hanging on the wall of my room was a belt

## WHEELLESS WAGONS AND FIRELESS GUNS

containing bullets. I had noticed it there during the afternoon. I got out of bed quietly, pulled out a handful of the bullets, opened them one by one with the aid of a kitchen knife, and poured the powder into one of the sounding openings of my violin. I had an idea that I might find this powder useful in connection with a plan that I had formulated for my return to my regiment when the good time came. Then I replaced the empty shells in the belt and crept quietly back to bed.

When Lieutenant Gross appeared in the morning and after we had had a light breakfast which the girl sullenly prepared for us, I told him that, owing to the accident to my violin the night before, I would have to get some new strings. I asked him to write me a note permitting me to go to the next village, where, I said, I knew I could procure what I wanted. This, I figured, would give me sufficient leeway to secure the information I was determined to get.

"No, that won't be necessary, Iogolevitch," the officer replied; "we'll send a soldier for them."

"Very well, Herr Lieutenant," I answered, agreeably, trying hard to conceal my disappointment. "That will be fine, but, really, I'm afraid the soldier won't be able to select just the kind of strings I need."

"Well, if it is absolutely necessary for you to make the trip yourself, you can go, of course,

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

but I thought I would save you the trouble, that's all!"

Save me the trouble! I would gladly have crawled there and back on my hands and knees if it had been necessary for me to do so in return for the information I was sure the trip would furnish me, but later, when the officer informed me that I could start and said I had better hurry if I expected to get back in time for mess that night, I asked him if he could furnish me with a horse, and I got that, too!

I seemed to be in luck all through. Things were certainly breaking easy for me. The pass which the lieutenant gave me got me past the patrols, and after I had left the village of Saven-diki behind me I detoured and rode in the direction of the trenches.

Some German soldiers whom I encountered did not even stop me, the German cavalry horse, with its characteristic saddle, dispelling any suspicion they might have felt. Several hundred feet behind the trenches I rode right up to a huge gun, camouflaged, which was pointing up in the air in the direction of the Russian lines.

One look was enough! The mystery was solved! The gun was nothing but a solid piece of wood shaped skilfully and mounted on wagon-wheels to resemble a gun-carriage and deceive our aviators.

## WHEELLESS WAGONS AND FIRELESS GUNS

I wheeled around quickly and made toward the river. My task was done and the only thing now was to get back to my regiment.

It would have been suicidal to have attempted to cross the bridge. There were trenches all along the river-bank except where the forest, running down to the water's edge, made artificial fortifications unnecessary. I decided that my best chance to get across the river would be by working through these trees.

Hitching my horse to a tree, I took my violin and started off through the woods in the direction of the river. I had not gone very far before I was stopped by patrols. My pass seemed to satisfy them, but they could not understand why I should be going in the direction of the river, until I explained that all I wanted was a drink.

"Very well, but be careful," they cautioned me. "Remember there are Russian troops on the other side, and if they see you they'll shoot."

I climbed down to the river-bank, at which point I was beyond the observation of the German patrols, set fire to my violin, and jumped into the river. When I had gotten about half-way across, my violin exploded with a loud report.

The explosion not only scared the Germans, who feared that a Russian grenade squad had succeeded in crossing the river and was climbing

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

the bank, throwing their grenades as they advanced, but it attracted the attention of the Russian patrols to me. I figured that my comrades would undoubtedly realize that I was trying to escape from the Germans or I would not be swimming direct for the Russian trenches in broad daylight. That, indeed, was the way it worked out. They fired volley after volley into the forest, but not a shot at the lone swimmer whose mission they could only guess. Their fire helped to keep the Germans under cover and enabled me to reach the opposite bank without mishap. As soon as I reached the side, however, the Huns started to fire at me and I had to seek the shelter of a huge rock. For more than an hour I remained under cover, realizing that if I attempted to climb the bank I would make an easy target.

When the Huns got tired of firing, concluding, perhaps, that I had either been accounted for or had made good my escape, I climbed to the top of the embankment, crawled across No Man's Land, and reached our lines in safety.

Without waiting to get dry I asked to be conducted at once to the headquarters of my regiment, as I wanted to get my report in as long as possible before the Germans discovered my intrigue.

At the colonel's quarters I burst right into his room without ceremony and reported breath-

## WHEELLESS WAGONS AND FIRELESS GUNS

lessly what I had discovered concerning the German big guns.

"Great work, Iogolevitch!" the colonel exclaimed, enthusiastically. "That's splendid! The mystery is now solved. Nicolai"—addressing his adjutant—"we are going to have a big night!" Then he told me to lie down on the sofa in his office and have a good sleep. The exertion of my swim and run and the excitement of the adventure had exhausted me, and I did as I was told very willingly. I was asleep as soon as my head touched the sofa.

When I woke up I found myself on the same sofa, but the room I was in was absolutely bare! Where were the maps on the walls and the furniture? Where was the colonel's desk, with its accumulations of plans, reports, maps, and papers? Was the whole thing a dream?

I sat up, rubbed my eyes, and gazed around the vacant room, completely flabbergasted, and then my eyes rested on a soldier lying asleep on the floor directly under me.

He was a Russian soldier and I gave him a nudge to wake him up.

"Is this headquarters?" I asked.

"Headquarters?" he repeated. "No, headquarters moved to Savendiki this morning!"

"Savendiki!" I echoed. "What are you talking about?"

"Yes, we took Savendiki during the night.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

Headquarters was moved there this morning, but the colonel told the boys not to disturb you and left me here to wait until you woke up!"

The whole situation became clear to me at once. Knowing that there was nothing to fear in the wooden guns which had looked so menacing, our troops had been hurled against Savendiki and had captured it. My information had borne quick fruit and I felt mighty proud about it, although there was a tinge of disappointment in it at that at the thought that I had not been given a chance to share in the garnering of it. Without waiting to discuss that phase of it with the soldier, I ran out of the hut and hurried down the village street—almost as fast as I had run a day or two before when I was being pursued by the Huns.

Coming down the street was our squadron. They were returning from Savendiki with several hundred prisoners. It was mighty good to see them. After we had exchanged experiences I received so many compliments in the shape of slaps on the back that I decided never to tell another soul about my adventure so long as I lived.

An hour or two later I was summoned to Captain Panunsev's quarters and told that I could have a two days' furlough.

"You'd better go to Radziwilichiski, Iogolevitch," he suggested. "That's the nearest village of any size. Have you got any money?"

## WHEELLESS WAGONS AND FIRELESS GUNS

I assured him that I had enough to answer all my possible needs.

"Well, you better take this, anyway. We want you to have a real good time," and he handed me three rubles.

As I started off for Radziwilichiski I reflected that it was the first holiday I had had since April, 1915, and it was now July, 1916. I turned over in my mind all the things I would like to do in those two short days of freedom. One duty that was imperative was to catch up with my correspondence. I had not written home for many months—I was ashamed to figure how long. As soon as I reached the village I would sit right down and write a real long letter to my mother. I would push right along.

Waskia must have understood my plan, for she lengthened her stride and clattered along at a great clip without any urging from me. Good old Waskia! What a faithful old war-horse she was!

It was evening when I reached the outskirts of the village and slowed up. I put Waskia up in a stable which was being used by the transport division of an infantry regiment and went to see the quartermaster, to whom I handed a note from Panunsev asking him to take care of me.

After supper I got in with some of the sol-

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

diers and spent the evening hobnobbing with the people of the village. There were a number of pretty girls in Radziwilichiski, and they did so much to entertain us and make us forget, for the time being, the strain and worry and the discomforts and dangers of army life that the time passed very quickly.

The next day I bought myself some new underwear and found a place where I could take a real hot bath. When I was all spruced up I felt better than at any time since I had enlisted.

I spent the whole day amusing myself in the village. It was very nice to be the center of a group of admiring villagers and to recount my adventures while they stood around with open mouths listening to me. Enough food was offered me to have fed my whole company for a week!

That night at supper I noticed some soldiers reading letters. Good Heavens! I had forgotten all my noble resolves to write home. Borrowing a pencil and paper, I sat right down and wrote my father, mother, brother, and sister. I covered sheet after sheet with stirring accounts of the wonderful adventures I had had, not forgetting the rear-guard action at Savendiki which had earned for me the St. George Cross.

As I wrote, memories of my family and my home-life crowded before my eyes and I don't

## WHEELLESS WAGONS AND FIRELESS GUNS

mind confessing that the tears came, too. The thought that my long silence must almost have broken my mother's heart filled me with shame. Instead of enjoying a furlough, I ought to be spending a week in the guard-house for the way I had acted. I decided to call my furlough a heat right then and there and get back to hard work and danger. That was what I deserved.

With continued self-reproaches I went to sleep, and early next morning, still thoroughly ashamed of myself, I fetched Waskia and started back for Savendiki. The fact that I was voluntarily forgoing several hours of furlough was a penance which comforted me considerably.

Before I started an officer cautioned me to ride carefully.

"The Huns have been pressing forward steadily for the past day or two," he warned, "and our forces have been compelled to give ground here and there. It may be that the enemy has reached the road to Savendiki at some points. Watch out for yourself!"

I assured him that I would take no chances, but inwardly I felt nothing approaching alarm. My clean underclothing, the good food I had had at Radziwilichiski, not to say anything of three chickens which dangled at the end of my saddle by a piece of string tied around their necks, made me feel at peace with all the world, and I jogged along as happy as a lark.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

"You wouldn't lead me into trouble, would you, Waskia?" I asked, leaning over the mare's neck and patting her affectionately. "You wouldn't get lost or anything—or carry me into the enemy's lines?"

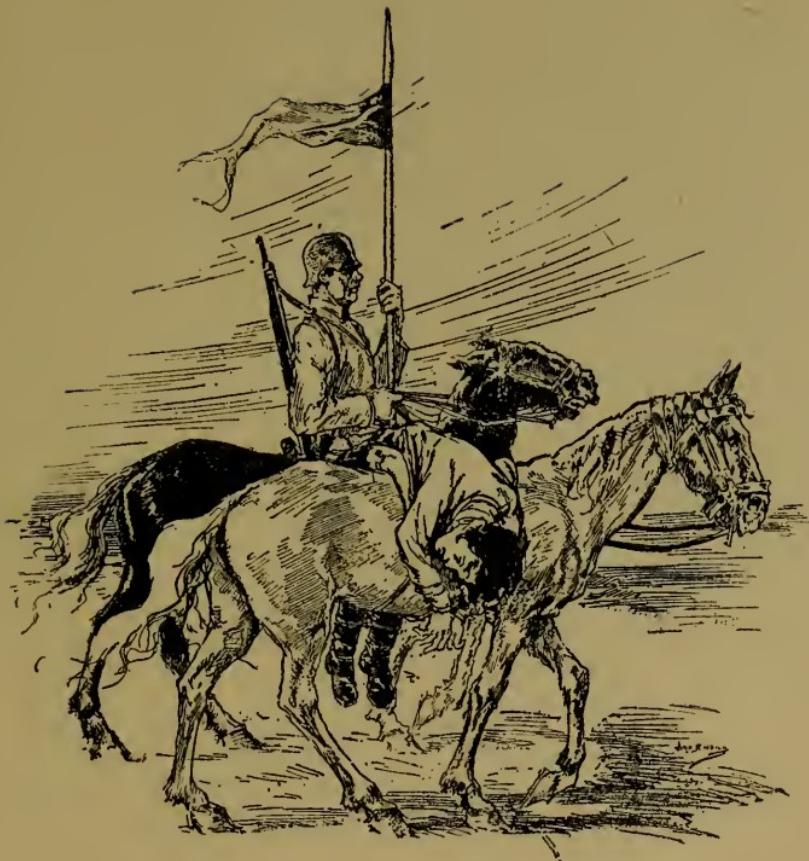
Waskia cantered along briskly, with never a snort, and I felt as secure as if I were riding again with Boris along the long, winding roads of far-off Harbin where we had spent our early years.

About fifteen miles down the road I passed a number of our transports and troops. At this point there was a road leading into the woods. Stopping one of the soldiers, I asked him if by following this by-road I could make a short cut to Savendiki. He assured me that I could, and I gave my horse the spurs and galloped off.

For seven or eight miles the road ran as straight as a die. Then it divided, one fork branching off to the right and the other to the left. Here was a dilemma. Perhaps some one would come along and direct me. I waited impatiently for ten or fifteen minutes, but in vain.

Then I decided that the road to the right must certainly be the one for me to follow, for the other would bring me out on the main road again.

Again I started off and I rode for an hour without incident. Soon I would meet our outposts and my furlough would be over.



WHEN I REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS I WAS RIDING ON A HORSE,  
STRAPPED ACROSS HIS BACK, HEAD DOWNWARD!

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

I was thinking over the happy incidents of the past forty-eight hours when three shots, one after another, brought Waskia to her knees, then to the ground, pulling me down with her, and before I had a chance to draw my revolver to defend myself something struck my head and everything swam before my eyes!

When I regained consciousness I felt something under me jolting. I was riding on a horse—across the back of a horse—strapped across his back, head downward!

I opened my eyes and just as quickly shut them, for I had gotten a glimpse of a soldier riding beside me, carrying a lance at the end of which was a little colored flag and wearing on his head a German helmet!

I was a German prisoner!

## XII

### A DISASTROUS FURLOUGH

WHAT had happened? How had I been captured? Where was Stassie and the rest of my squadron? How badly was I wounded? Where was I being taken? What were the chances of escape?

These and a dozen other questions came rapidly to my mind. It was several minutes before the answer came in the recollection of my furlough at Radziwilichiski, my ride through the woods, the three shots and the blow on the head, and then I opened my eyes again and took another look at my captor.

He was a typical German cavalry patrol—trim, straight-backed, square-shouldered, serious-looking. I considered for a moment whether there was anything to be gained by feigning continued unconsciousness, and, deciding that there was not, hailed the Hun in German.

He looked around hastily, surprised to hear himself addressed in his own language by a

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

Russian prisoner, and then explained to me that I had been captured by his patrol and that he was taking me to a village near Kelniy, where his regiment was stationed and where I would be handed over to the officers.

We overtook a man driving a truck, and the soldier was considerate enough to unstrap me from the horse and put me in the truck instead, riding right behind me and keeping his eye on me.

I felt too weak even to think of escape and soon fell asleep. I awoke just as the wagon drove into the center of a crowd of German soldiers, and heard one of them command in very poor Russian, "Get out of there, you dirty Russian!"

"Are you addressing me?" I asked, in German.

To conceal his surprise he grabbed me by the feet and jerked me out of the wagon.

"Attention!" an officer yelled as I tumbled to the ground.

I obeyed without too much alacrity and was ordered to move over to a table in front of a hut, at which sat two other officers. All sorts of questions were asked me, including my age, which I gave them correctly—going on fifteen.

At that they looked at one another in surprise and then warned me not to lie. Then they started to cross-question me, asking how it was I spoke such good German. I told them that

## A DISASTROUS FURLOUGH

when I was a child I had spent some time at Dresden, which was true, and that they could easily confirm my statements by communicating with the school that I attended there.

They said they would investigate my story.

"In the mean time, however," the officer in command added, "you will be treated as a military prisoner, although, because of your youth, we are going to keep you here instead of sending you to a prison-camp."

A soldier stepped up to the officers' table at a word of command and I was ordered to follow him. He led me to a hut in which I found forty other Russian prisoners. They told me they had been captured the previous night and were waiting to be transferred to a prison-camp.

Most of these poor chaps were sitting on the floor. They looked very despondent, and from what we had heard of the treatment accorded our prisoners by the Germans they had every reason to be downhearted. I pitied them from the bottom of my heart.

An officer whom I had not noticed before came swaggering toward me.

"Tell these swine that we don't purpose to let them sit idly here. There are trenches to be dug and you are all going to get busy right away. There isn't going to be any loafing while I have anything to say!"

"Is there going to be any lunch, lieutenant?"

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

I asked, trying to show him that even if we were prisoners we still had some spirit left.

"None of your insolence!" he yelled, getting red in the face with anger. Although the rest of the prisoners did not understand what he said, they knew I had "got his goat"—as your expression is—and they looked a bit nervous, especially when some of the German soldiers grabbed their rifles to scare me.

"Thank you, lieutenant!" I replied, rubbing my ear as though it had been affected by his shouting, "but I did not quite get the time. Did you say afternoon lunch or supper?"

To that there was no answer, the soldiers hustling us all out of the room and leading us to a bridge where trenches were to be dug. Shovels were given us and, stirred on by German soldiers who shouted at us continually, we started to dig. Our job was to build a trench connecting the bridge with a trench about a quarter of a mile outside the village.

For a while the work did not seem particularly hard to me. My head still ached from the blow I had received and I was ravenously hungry, but the work itself did not bother me particularly.

After several hours of digging, however, my back and arm muscles commenced to protest against this unwonted labor, but there was no stopping. Afternoon came and the guard was

## A DISASTROUS FURLOUGH

changed, but no food was brought us nor were we given any breathing-spell. The perspiration dripped from our foreheads, our hands were blistered, and we were almost famished, but the Huns showed not the slightest interest in our suffering. We were prisoners—that was enough.

I placed my hand in my pocket to get a piece of bread and a handkerchief to wipe the perspiration from my face—everything was gone! My money, papers, and precious crust of bread had been confiscated. Fortunately I had not been wearing my medal, or that would have been taken, too.

Calling one of the sergeants who was watching my particular section of the work, I told him that I was too weak to go on.

"You weren't too weak to fight, were you? Well, you're strong enough to work. You'll go right on the same as the others till you get orders to stop!"

A moment or two later, however, he relented. He said I could go over to the bridge and straighten out some blocks of wood that were stored under it. This gave me a chance to drink some water and, incidentally, revealed to me a number of good hiding-places which I stowed away in my memory for possible future use.

It was not until darkness came—which, for-

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

tunately, was about half past three in the afternoon—that we were ordered to stop work, although if we had not been relieved right then I think nature would have stopped some of us. We were lined up and marched off to a shed, where most of us dropped to the floor, shivering from cold and weak from hunger and fatigue.

I appealed to one of the German soldiers who were standing guard over us to get us something to eat.

"We wouldn't treat a German dog this way!" I protested.

"It's pretty tough, I know," he admitted—he was evidently a decent sort of Hun—"but it's not up to me. I can't help it. I've got some tobacco, though, if you want that. You can chew it. That will burn your throats and make you forget your hunger!"

He handed me about half a pound of strong tobacco, which I divided among the men, and we followed his suggestion. I don't know that it made us forget our hunger, but it certainly burnt our throats—mine, at any rate. Some of the men went to sleep, but they were not allowed to rest long. A squad of soldiers entered the shed and ordered every one but me to leave the room. They were on their way to the prison-camp.

Left alone, I soon fell asleep. I awoke late the next morning to find my throat swollen so

## A DISASTROUS FURLOUGH

that I could hardly breathe. My head was so heavy that I felt dizzy when I stood on my feet.

There was a guard sitting in the doorway, and, noticing that I had awakened, he told me that in a few minutes I would receive a meal.

"It will be all you get for the day," he added, "so you better make the most of it."

A moment or two later another soldier came into the room, bringing an earthenware bowl and a spoon, which he placed near me. The dish consisted of a rather thin soup in which a few pieces of potato were floating around. My attempt to swallow a spoonful proved so painful that, famished as I was, I thrust the bowl aside and lay down again.

Later I tried to swallow some more of the soup and gradually, despite the pain, I managed to get it all down.

For three days I was left considerably to myself. As I was the only prisoner in the place, they did not put me to work, but I was questioned intermittently by officers who visited the shed and who wanted to know everything they could find out about conditions in the Russian army. Needless to say, they didn't learn very much of value from me.

Left alone, I had much to engage my thoughts. I was particularly thankful that the misfortune that had overtaken me had come after I had written my family instead of before. The knowl-

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

edge that I was a captive would have been a sad shock to my mother. As it was, the letter I had sent off only a few days before was full of cheering news, and it comforted me to know that, no matter what was in store for me, my family would be spared the pain of knowing it.

On the fourth day of my captivity another party of Russian prisoners was brought in, and when they were put to work I was taken with them. Again we were assigned to the task of connecting the bridge with the line of trenches by means of a tunnel.

For two days we continued on this job, and then another prisoner and I were sent to the trench end of the tunnel to build a wire door at the entrance.

While we were putting the wires in place our guard went inside the tunnel. My friend seized a coil of this wire and quickly barred the entrance so that no one could emerge. He looked at me triumphantly. I realized at once that his plan was little less than madness, but I decided to join him. A moment later we were on our way, running for liberty toward the forest!

We had not gone five hundred yards before we were noticed. About fifty cavalrymen set off in pursuit, firing at us as they gained on us. In five minutes it was all over and a little later we stood before the officers, our bodies bruised black and blue from the blows we had received.

## A DISASTROUS FURLOUGH

"Trying to escape, eh?" one of the officers sneered.

I did not answer, and Vladimir, my fellow-prisoner, did not understand.

"I will show you, you insolent swine!" the officer thundered, jumping up from his chair and bringing his fist down heavily on the table.

The officer addressed me rather than Vladimir, not because I understood German, but because Vladimir towered above him, while I was small enough for him to bully.

Little did the Hun understand the character of brave Vladimir. Instead of appreciating the officer's choice of a victim, the big-hearted Russian resented it. I saw his face turn red, but I was totally unprepared for what happened.

Striding up to the officer with the manner of a giant reprimanding a pygmy, he pushed the officer's face back with the palm of his hand and forced him into his seat. When the officer had seated himself with more violence than grace the big fellow pointed to himself and indicated that he was the man to be spoken to if any threats were going to be made.

The men in the room were paralyzed by the Russian's audacity. The officer, gaining his composure, leaned over to seize a revolver lying on the table, but Vladimir moved toward him, and the officer decided suddenly to let the revolver lay where it was.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

Then another officer in the room commanded the soldiers to seize Vladimir. Six privates picked up their guns and marched toward him. He made it clear to them that he did not intend to resist, and he followed them quietly out of the room.

With Vladimir out of the room, the officer who was the cause of all the trouble plucked up courage, although he was still trembling. In a strained, unnatural voice he shouted that we would both pay dearly for our conduct.

I spent that night in a room with Vladimir. We were closely guarded, but we talked over the events of the day freely.

"You're a brave fellow, Vladimir," I told him, "but it is useless for us to resist, outnumbered as we are. We shall only bring greater suffering on our shoulders if we get ugly."

"That is true, corporal," the big fellow assented, "but I won't let these Huns bully me or any other Russian without letting them know that no single Hun can get away with it!"

The next morning the officer who had cross-examined me the day I was first brought in came into our room, followed by ten soldiers. I waited anxiously his announcement of the punishment that was to be imposed upon us.

"Yesterday," he said, cuttingly, addressing Vladimir, "you insulted an officer of the German Imperial Government because you felt that

## A DISASTROUS FURLOUGH

you were his superior in physical strength. You will be punished in such a way that your strength will be of no avail."

All the horrible stories I had heard about the German method of treating recalcitrant prisoners came into my mind.

"You may have your choice of two punishments. One is to be tied to a post and be thoroughly beaten. The other is to be nailed up in a long box for three days. If you choose the latter you will have just enough air to keep you alive, and no more. Take half an hour to think it over."

I interpreted what he had said to Vladimir after the officer had left the room.

"Why didn't you tell me when he was here!" Vladimir complained, his anger aroused at the officer's hideous threat. "It would have given these ten fingers," and he held his ten powerful digits up before my eyes, "peculiar satisfaction to have tightened themselves around that coward's throat!"

Then a soldier entered the room, but our attention was not really attracted to him until he attempted, from the rear, to throw a rope around Vladimir's shoulders. Vladimir turned suddenly and threw his full weight against the soldier and sent him crashing against the wall. Then came a shot. The guard in the doorway had fired point-blank at Vladimir and

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

the big fellow's arm was hanging limp at his side.

This enraged me so that I lost all sense of prudence. Seizing a near-by chair, I hurled it at the guard and knocked his rifle from his hands. Then more soldiers entered and we were seized and dragged out to the village square.

There a group of officers were standing at an improvised judge's bench. The soldiers who had brought us over explained what had occurred, and the coward officer of yesterday smiled revengefully as he saw an opportunity to even up the score.

"You little cur!" he shouted, venomously, stepping toward me and swinging a heavy blow at my chin.

I drew my head back just in time to escape his vicious swing, and drew back my arm to counter, but a soldier seized my hand and prevented further complications.

Then Vladimir was seized and dragged to a post, to which they proceeded to tie him for his beating.

"Tell the officers that I prefer the other punishment," he shouted to me as they led him off. "I don't want to see their dirty faces!"

I didn't repeat the latter part of his message, not wishing to aggravate matters, but he was immediately taken away to suffer the form of punishment he had indicated, while I was

## A DISASTROUS FURLOUGH

dragged to the post and lashed to it in his place.

There were several women in the crowd that had gathered around the whipping-post, and when they saw me tied to it by my hands and feet they shrieked in horror.

From sheer nervousness I began to smile and then to laugh. I heard some one say, "Be brave to the last," and I tried to obey that injunction, and my laughter became louder and louder, as though I were enjoying the devil's own jest.

A terrible shriek from the other end of the square where Vladimir had been dragged caught my ears. It was a woman's voice, and the sound of hammering that immediately followed told me too well what was happening to poor Vladimir.

Then came a torrent of blows from a whip which seemed to have the tongue of a thousand scorpions, and everything faded from before my eyes.

## XIII

### SOUVENIRS

WHEN I came to my senses I was still lashed to the post. There was no longer a crowd about me. A soldier was marching up and down in front of me. I recognized him as the man who had shot Vladimir.

As soon as he saw that I was again conscious he walked toward me.

"A drink of water, please," I pleaded.

There was a pail beside him and he stooped to pick it up. The water did not look very clean, but it would moisten my parched lips. The Hun moved intolerably slowly. Why couldn't he hurry?

He raised the pail, and then with a wicked leer he turned it upside down and let the water run over the cobblestones!

Weak as I was, I struggled in my bonds. If I could have freed myself at that moment I would have made that fiend pay for his cruelty if it cost me my life, but my struggles were futile and only made my smarting body pain the more.

## SOUVENIRS

The Hun laughed at my despair and held his rifle toward me.

"This is what you threw out of my hands yesterday!" he said, leering at me.

Experience had taught me that the Hun never wastes his breath calling up unpleasant recollections unless they are to be used as an excuse for an act of cruelty to come.

"I remember it," I said.

"Well, now you are to become really acquainted with it!" And, gripping the gun tightly near the muzzle, he swung his arms back in the position of a man about to chop down a sturdy tree and brought the butt of his weapon down full force against my leg!

The pain and shock of the blow sickened me. I knew that I was going to faint. Just before I lost consciousness, however, I saw the brute raise his gun again for a second blow. It seemed as if the butt was going to



WHEN I CAME TO MY SENSES I  
WAS STILL LASHED TO THE POST

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

strike me from a distance of a mile away. I threw my head back—

When I awoke—I don't know how long afterward—I was lying on a bed in a little hut. A woman sat in the corner of the room, crying. I felt an aching, gnawing pain in my left leg. I tried to move it, but I discovered that I had no control over it whatever.

Then I remembered the beating I had received and I closed my eyes and tried to sleep in an effort to blot out recollection of my troubles, but my pain was so great that sleep would not come. I tried my leg again and wondered how badly I had been hurt.

"Where am I?" I asked.

"Sh-sh—don't speak," she whispered, staring at me in a helpless sort of way, like a dumb, frightened animal.

I shut my eyes and attempted to think clearly. Poor Vladimir! What had been his fate? I could not banish him from my thoughts.

"Where is my friend—the other Russian prisoner?"

There was no answer. I wondered whether she had heard me. The position in which I lay made it impossible for me to look up. Just as I was about to repeat my question the door opened and a man walked in.

At first I could not tell who he was, but later I saw by his epaulets that he was a doctor. I

## SOUVENIRS

shut my eyes. He felt my pulse, listened to my heart, and muttered something to himself, I could not tell what. Then he left.

It became dark. The woman lit a lamp. It revealed a squalid, dirty interior. The light pained my eyes and, in spite of the pain the effort caused me, I turned over and fell asleep.

The next morning a German soldier came to my bedside. Among other things he brought me the cheering intelligence that I was to be sent to Germany within a few days. The information was given me, I am sure, out of no kindness of motive—the Hun thought it would add a touch of bitterness to my pain. As a matter of fact, however, it worked just the other way. It gave me something to think of. Somehow I would have to find a way to escape, because I would rather have died than have been taken to Germany a prisoner.

That morning I was given a real breakfast and it made me feel considerably better. My brain was quite clear and I discovered, much to my joy, that, while my left leg was terribly swollen and quite black from the knee to the hip, the bone was not broken.

For five days I was allowed to remain in the hut in which I found myself when I came to after my beating. By that time I was able to hobble around the room a bit, though not without pain. I had just been trying how far I

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

could go when I observed, through the window, the officer who cross-examined me. He was approaching the hut, with three soldiers.

I jumped quickly into bed, hoping to convey the impression that I was not yet strong enough to get up. The officer entered the room and warned me that the next day I was to be taken before the highest German officials in that section of the country.

"And I warn you," he added, "that if you show any more of your insolence, you'll regret the day as long as you live!"

I turned to the wall and began to snore.

"You heard me!" he said, and walked out.

Putting two and two together, I figured that the following day I would probably be started on my way to Germany. Once I got into enemy territory, I concluded, it would be mighty difficult to make a successful escape. If I was to make a safe get-away, my better plan would be to try it that night, and that was what I decided to do. With the kitchen knife, which I had taken from the woman, I was prepared to kill myself if the plan failed.

As soon as it was dark I climbed out of the window unnoticed. Bending low, I scurried from corner to corner as fast as my bruised leg would permit, always making in the direction of the bridge. When I passed the first patrol on this side without being observed I climbed under the

## SOUVENIRS

bridge and hid myself between the wooden blocks I had noticed when working there with the prison squad, and I felt comparatively safe.

A few hours later I heard excited voices and the tramping of hasty footsteps on the bridge. Some one shouted an order to guard both ends of the tunnel. I realized then that my escape had been discovered and that every effort would be made to recapture me. The safest thing I could do was to remain just where I was until the hue and cry had abated. They would never imagine that I had remained right under their noses, and after hours of fruitless search they would conclude that I had outwitted them for good.

I stayed in my hiding-place under the bridge all night and all the next day, subsisting on the scanty stock of food I had stuffed into my pockets before I started.

In the evening I started out. By that time, I figured, they must have given up all hope of finding me. I crept into the tunnel, holding my knife ready to thrust into any one who opposed me.

When I reached the end of the tunnel I decided to wait there until it grew a little darker, as there were always one or two soldiers in the trench. When the sentry passed by me I could almost touch his shoulder from where I lay concealed in the tunnel, but, for obvious reasons, I

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

didn't. Instead I waited until he had passed by me several times, in which way I learned how long the intervals were between his periodic appearances, and then, at the opportune moment just after he had passed me, I jumped into the trench and out again, a few minutes later, into the forest.

All night long I advanced by hops, using my sound leg and saving the left one as much as possible. I decided to keep on as long as possible during the night, sleeping in the daytime, when the danger of meeting German patrols would have been too great to have continued my journey. Behind several trees, one of them of gigantic size, I found a hole in the ground. It was partly covered with leaves and presented, I thought, a wonderful place to hide for the day. I jumped into it and covered myself as completely as possible with the foliage.

It was not many minutes before I was fast asleep and I slept heavily. When I ultimately awoke it was daylight. From the way I felt I knew that I must have slept many hours, and I concluded that I had slept all day and all night and it was now morning again. All speculations along this line were rudely jostled out of my mind, however, when I heard several voices directly above me carrying on a conversation in German!

I listened breathlessly. Was my hiding-place

## SOUVENIRS

known to them? Had I come to the end of my rope?

"Herr Lieutenant," said one voice, "why don't you take a rest? I shall remain on guard and wake you if necessary."

This was encouraging. Evidently I was not the occasion of their presence.

I carefully brushed some of the leaves away in an effort to ascertain who it was who intended to take a rest right on top of me. All I could see were three saddled horses tied to a tree. Was it possible that these horses spoke German?

"I will take off my belt. It will be more comfortable to sleep without it." The voice came from the other side of the tree, and I saw a hand place a belt on the ground right near me. In it was a revolver.

Ordinarily I should have hesitated to take what didn't belong to me, but that revolver winked to me too temptingly. Raising myself out of the hole on my elbows, I leaned over and slowly and carefully removed the revolver from the case.

The weapon was only just in my hands when the officer turned. It seemed to me that he planned to place his belt between the soldier and himself instead of where he had dropped it originally. In doing so, however, he suddenly found himself facing his own revolver.

I had no idea of shooting him. That would



THE WEAPON WAS JUST IN MY HAND WHEN THE OFFICER TURNED AND FOUND  
HIMSELF FACING HIS OWN REVOLVER

## SOUVENIRS

have made a noise and perhaps brought some more Huns. My best plan was merely to keep the two Huns covered. But while my brain quickly came to those prudent conclusions my hand scoffed at such sober and sensible reflections. One shot went into the ground and another traveled right past the face of a soldier who sat near by, gun in hand.

He dropped his gun as a result of the shock, for he thought the officer had shot at him. It was only when he turned to look at his officer that he saw me. He also saw his lieutenant with hands upraised in token of surrender.

The private bent to pick up his gun, but I warned him to raise his arms instead, which he did.

I asked them where I could find the Russian forces. The shock of the experience must have bereft them of all speech, for they refused to tell me. Then I ordered them to march backward, faces turned toward me, in the direction I indicated. The soldier thereupon told me that there were Russian patrols in another direction which he pointed out. Although mistrusting him, I started off in the direction he indicated.

We had not gone fifty yards in this direction when a shot from a tree burned into my leg. I threw myself on the ground and pulled both of the Huns down on top of me. Seizing the

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

officer by the shirt, I held him with my left hand and kept him on top of me to shield me from further shots from the tree. With my right hand, in which I held the officer's revolver, I shot the private through the shoulder.

Then I shot into the air, at the same time ordering the men to maintain their positions, which covered me so that I could not be made a target by the man in the tree. I ordered the officer to direct the hidden marksman to drop his gun instantly. He was reluctant to do so until he noticed the muzzle of my revolver pointing at his stomach. Then he shouted the order and the gun came tumbling down from a tree not a hundred yards away.

I backed up toward the gun, compelling the men to follow me. Reaching down, I seized the gun with my left hand and ordered the man in the tree to descend, warning him that his two comrades would pay with their lives if he attempted any funny business.

When all three were on the ground, with their five hands up—the man I had shot could raise only one—I looked at my leg to see whether it was still there. It was so numb it might just as well have been missing. A huge red stain on my trousers demanded attention.

I asked the lieutenant to let me have the bandage which I knew German officers invariably carried in their pockets. The alacrity with

## SOUVENIRS

which he shot his hand to his back pocket made me change my mind.

"Halt!" I shouted. "Raise your hands instantly! I'll get the bandage myself!"

Ordering him to advance a few steps, I made him turn his back to me. Then I went up to him and placed my hand into his back pocket. The "bandage" he had been reaching for was a little Lady Browning revolver!

"This sort of bandage," I said, "I can use to better advantage on your wounded friend. Perhaps it will teach him in which direction the Russian forces are!"

"Don't shoot!" he begged. "You'll find a real bandage in my right-hand pocket!"

Hurling the gun as far from me as I could, having no further use for it, I searched the other two men and my efforts produced two bandages.

Backing the men toward their three horses, I used their reins to advantage as a noose about the necks of each of them.

Then I stepped a little to one side, took my boot off the wounded leg, rolled up my military trousers and also the sailor trousers underneath, and tied the bandage about the wound to stop the flow of blood. Then I tied up the shoulder of the wounded man. Apparently this little kindness was totally unexpected, for he murmured profuse thanks.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

Again I inquired as to how we might reach the Russians. I made my position perfectly clear to them. I didn't intend to take the chance of returning to the prison-camp from which I had had the good luck to escape. If I couldn't get back to my own lines, I certainly didn't intend to be recaptured alive, and if they had any idea of leading me into the hands of their comrades they were just planning their own deaths, for at the first sign of German soldiers I would shoot the three of them in cold blood.

On the other hand, I pointed out, if they would direct me to the Russian lines, while that would mean their own captivity, they could be sure of decent treatment as prisoners. It would be better for them to become prisoners than to die ingloriously in the woods.

The man whose wound I had dressed seemed convinced by my straightforwardness.

"I will show you the way," he said. "This time I won't lead you into any ambush. You can keep the reins around our necks until I make good."

Much to my surprise, he then began to swear at his superior officer, claiming that as for himself he would be glad to be among decent people. I asked him why he hadn't shown such good sense before. Every man in a Russian uniform, I assured him, would treat him kindly.

## SOUVENIRS

"They told us differently—our officers!" the man replied, bitterly. "And we were fools enough to believe them."

We traveled for an hour or two without meeting a living soul. I began to feel as if I had a weight of half a ton tied to my leg. I called a halt. My strength was slowly ebbing away. I felt I could go no farther, and yet any show of weakness on my part, I realized, might prove disastrous to me.

Fortunately I had an ally in the wounded soldier. Noticing my condition, he ordered the other private to take me under the arm and help me along. We continued slowly in this way for another hour, when we were all startled to hear the trampling of horses' hoofs. It was about an even chance as to whether they were Germans or Russians. I saw a look of hope spring to the officer's countenance, but it was short-lived, for I at once ordered our party to retire into the woods which lined the road and to keep absolutely still until I had discerned whether the on-comers were friends or foes.

"In either event, you lose!" I pointed out to the officer. "If they're Germans and you make the slightest effort to attract their attention, you die like dogs. If they are my friends, you are my prisoners! Now, then, watch yourselves!"

Through the trees I now saw a party of horse-

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

men rapidly approaching. There was something in their manner of riding that told me they were Cossacks, and as they came nearer I became quite convinced of it.

"Who goes there?" I shouted as loud as I could, in Russian.

"Our own!" came back the welcome answer, and a moment or two later I ran out into the road to greet them. I was helped on to a horse behind one of the Cossacks and my three prisoners were similarly accommodated, after being properly trussed so that they could do no harm, and we rode rapidly back to our lines. I told the officers my entire story from the day I was captured, and requested to be sent to my regiment.

"Better rest here to-night," the officer suggested. "We'll send you to the Third Dragoons in the morning!"

I was accommodated in one of the officers' huts, and for the first time in several weeks slept again on a decent cot among friends.

Tired and exhausted as I was, I did not close my eyes that night before I had thanked God for the consideration He had shown me. I had been through dangers which seemed insuperable. Only by divine help could I have hoped to escape, and that unwavering Ally had brought me safely through. I was very much moved by these reflections, but my

## SOUVENIRS

prayer of gratitude comforted me and I soon fell asleep.

In the morning, as I was saying farewell to my prisoners, the one who was wounded shook my hand, gave me his photograph and the address of his relatives in Germany, and implored me to write to them, which I afterward did through Red Cross channels. Poor fellow! Although he had tried to double-cross me in the first place, I bore him no ill-will for it. In his place I would have acted the same way. He atoned for it afterward by helping me along when my wound began to get the best of me and when, if he had been less considerate, his comrades might have disposed of me and made their escape.

The photograph he gave me, and which I still have, was on a postal-card which he had evidently planned to send away. It gave his name as Gottlieb Rittweg, a volunteer in the Fifth Bavarian Cavalry Division, Sixth Volunteer Regiment, Fifth Squadron.

Before I left, the military doctor examined my wound. He said that it was only a flesh wound and would heal rapidly if I took care of it. He cleaned it, put some iodine inside and around it, and then bandaged it, giving me a few extra bandages for future use.

"In two weeks it will all be healed up," he promised. "Good-by. Good luck!"

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

I thanked him and then, jumping on a horse which had been brought out for me, I rode off, accompanied by another soldier as guide.

As we cantered along the road I thought over all the stirring adventures of the past few weeks. "Pretty active life for a young violinist!" I thought. "Life will seem pretty tame after what I've been through lately!"

That, indeed, did seem like a reasonable conclusion to draw, and yet within but a few days I was to go through an adventure which made all my previous experiences pale into insignificance.

## XIV

### TWO AGAINST TWENTY

I HAD to ride about a day and a half before I reached my regiment. I hurried to the captain's quarters.

"What's the matter, Iogolevitch?" he asked, sternly. "Your furlough expired several weeks ago. What's your excuse?"

I handed him a report which had been given me by the officer to whom I had delivered my prisoners.

"Great work, my boy!" he exclaimed, after he had read the report, getting up from his chair and kissing me on both cheeks. "This is fine. How badly were you injured?"

"Not very much, captain," I answered. "The Huns beat me up pretty bad and then, coming back, I was shot in the leg, but the doctor says the wound will be all healed in a couple of weeks."

"Well, I think you've earned a real rest. You can take a furlough for six weeks!"

"I thank you, captain, but, judging from the

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

developments of my last furlough, I think I'm better off in active service. Anyway, captain, I don't really need a furlough and, if I may, I would rather stay with the squadron!"

The upshot of it was that I was ordered to one of the huts, where I was to rest until I had entirely recovered from the effects of my adventure.

Lying on the bed to which I had been assigned, I was thinking over all the incidents of my recent experience and wondering how long it would be before I would have a chance to tell the whole story to Stassie and the rest of the fellows, when I heard the approach of horses and I jumped to the door to see who was coming.

Coming down the village street was my whole squadron. I stood at the door, hoping to be able to say a word or two to those nearest me as they passed by, but as they reached my hut, they were ordered to wheel around and form a semicircle around me. Then Captain Panunsev made a speech telling the men of my experiences during the past few weeks and concluding with the statement that I was to be presented for a second war-cross of St. George!

I almost keeled over with joy at this news. As the captain spoke my eyes were scanning the faces of the men gathered around me. Finally they rested on Stassie. When the captain announced that I was to receive a second war-cross

## TWO AGAINST TWENTY

Stassie indicated by mute signs that I ought to ask the commander to give him one, too.

When the speech was over the men were dismissed, and I was soon in their midst going over the experiences of my disastrous furlough. Then



CAPTAIN PANUNSEV MADE A SPEECH TELLING THE MEN OF MY EXPERIENCES AND ANNOUNCED THAT I WAS TO BE PRESENTED FOR A SECOND WAR-CROSS OF ST. GEORGE.

Captain Panunsev and Podporutchik Lavronsev came into my hut and made me take off my bandages, that they might inspect my wound.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

"Well, Iogolevitch," Panunsev commented as he helped me rebind the leg, "you are a pretty lucky boy. You will stay on the sick-list until this wound is entirely healed. If you like, Stanislav can bunk here with you."

That suited me admirably and Stassie brought around some of his belongings and arranged to occupy the hut with me.

"If I had known those boots I made you take were going to bring you all this luck," Stassie repined, referring to the war-crosses that were coming to me, "I would never have let you even see them! You could have gone barefooted for the rest of your life before I would have offered them to you. And to think of it—you were going to throw them out!"

Then he broke out to the following effect:

"There are those who will claim  
That honor and fame  
Of merit and pluck are the fruits,  
But from all I can see  
It is quite clear to me  
There's more in a dead man's boots!"

Stassie spent several days with me. Then he told me that I would have to get another roommate, because he had been ordered to another village nearer the German lines for patrol work. That didn't suit me at all. I felt strong enough to be taken off the sick-list, anyway, and so I

## TWO AGAINST TWENTY

went to Captain Panunsev and asked to be put on active work.

At first he demurred, but after the doctor had looked me over it was decided that I might get back to work. A new horse was given me, and late that afternoon Stassie and I, with about twenty other men from our squadron, started off for the village in question.

Arriving there at night, we took possession of the few huts that remained, and half of us were assigned to patrol work. Stassie and I didn't go out until midnight, when we had to relieve the fellows who went out first. In our patrol there were five other fellows besides ourselves. Our object was to ascertain the whereabouts of the German patrol, who we knew must be in the vicinity, and test their strength.

There was little to be accomplished at night, but we covered a lot of ground just the same. About daybreak we came to a clearing in the woods and about a quarter of a mile away we could see a hut, with a shed adjoining, the whole surrounded by a barbed-wire fence.

"This looks interesting!" exclaimed Stassie.  
"Something tells me that place is occupied."

To approach the hut across the clearing would have been too risky. We accordingly made a wide detour through the forest and came out at a point which was much nearer our objective.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

Leaving the five other men to cover us from the shelter of the woods, Stassie and I dismounted and went forward cautiously to inspect the hut, approaching it from a side which had no windows.

When we reached the blind wall we separated, Stassie going around one way and I the other. Stassie had his rifle and I had my own pistol in one hand and Stassie's Smith & Wesson in the other.

Everything was so quiet that we fully expected to find that all our precautions had been for nothing. We would enter the hut and find it in the usual disordered state which was common wherever the Germans had penetrated.

In this frame of mind I turned the corner of the building rather briskly and, wow!—my head struck the head of another man violently. I saw a million stars and a—German uniform! I fired. The Hun fired back, then turned and fled. Even at that short distance neither of our shots had taken effect—we had both fired too hastily.

I jumped into the hut. My first glimpse convinced me that I had acted rashly. In the dim light shed by a lamp in the center of the room I discerned the forms of no less than twenty German soldiers! Some were asleep on the ground, others were sitting up and rubbing their eyes lazily, wondering, no doubt, whether they had

## TWO AGAINST TWENTY

actually heard firing or had just dreamed of shots, while one or two were hastening toward the door to investigate. In one corner of the room the men's rifles were stacked.



I LEAPED IN FRONT OF THE RIFLES AND ORDERED THE MEN WHO  
WERE ADVANCING TOWARD THE DOOR TO STOP AND THROW UP  
THEIR HANDS

My first impulse was to back out, but the door closed behind me and made retreat impossible. I leaped in front of the rifles and ordered the men who were advancing toward the door to stop and throw up their hands. They obeyed instantly, but another man, seeing

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

that I had all I could do to keep them covered, made for the window and started to climb through. He came crashing back into the room, struck on the head by the butt of Stassie's rifle.

A moment later the door opened and Stassie entered. The incident diverted my attention just long enough to give some one a chance to hurl a chair at my head. I threw up my arm and warded off the blow, but the impact threw me backward into the stack of rifles, and in the confusion the men started toward me.

I saw Stassie forcing his way through them. The room was too small and too crowded for him to use his rifle, but he was able to swing his powerful arms to good effect. Smashing and tripping, shoving and trampling, the big fellow swept through that crowd of sleepy Huns like a bull in a wheat-field, and in a moment he was at my side and had grabbed one of my pistols and pulled me to my feet.

Half a dozen of the Huns had taken advantage of the mêlée to make their escape, grabbing rifles as they went, and now a volley of shots came from them directed at the house, evidently intended to scare us.

"The place is surrounded!" I shouted in German, sensing what had happened and deciding to make capital out of it. "It is useless for you to try to escape. Your men who just left have been caught by the fire from our men in

## TWO AGAINST TWENTY

the forest. Sure death awaits the man who leaves this hut!"

A heavy-set German officer rushed at Stassie. Stassie used his feet skilfully and the Hun went sprawling. At the same time we both let fire to show them that we meant business. Several of the men fell, and that brought the rest of them to their senses.

"Back up against the wall, every single one of you," I yelled, "or we'll shoot you full of holes!" They obeyed sullenly, casting longing eyes at their rifles, which they had been unable to reach.

A moment later the men we had left in the woods, who had heard the firing, came bursting into the room. With their help it was a simple matter to round up our prisoners and start with them back to the village. There were nine privates, three of them wounded, and two officers, one wounded. Four men and one officer we left dead in the hut. Several others had made good their escape.

Some time after, when I went to America and took part in the "speed-up" campaign in the shipyards and munition-factories, I had occasion to address the men employed in the Smith & Wesson factory, and when I told them how Stassie's revolver had helped us round up no less than eleven Huns and account for five others they went wild with enthusiasm. It gave

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

them a concrete example of the importance of hurrying arms and munitions to the men "over there," and perhaps it inspired them to greater efforts.

Shortly after our prisoners were turned over to our officers Stassie received word that he was to be recommended for a medal for bravery for his services in bringing back the three prisoners some weeks before and for the part he played in our last joint adventure, and the brave fellow could hardly hold himself for joy.

When, a day or two later, our squadron rejoined the regiment we learned that with two other regiments we were to take part in a big drive against the Germans.

The Huns were in possession of a forest which it was our task to capture. Under the protection of our light artillery, we advanced, on foot, on our objective, but we encountered a very stiff resistance. The German artillery seemed to have perfect range and a storm of shells worked havoc in our ranks. I feared that we were again to suffer through some treachery in our High Command.

I was stationed behind a hastily constructed barricade with a number of other men from our regiment. Although I was so busy loading and firing my rifle that I did not have much time for reflection, it occurred to me that our barricade offered us very little protection. The first well-

## TWO AGAINST TWENTY

directed shell would blow us to bits, and shells were bursting all around us. The noise was terrific. It seemed to me that the climax of my adventures was about to break. I had a feeling that I would never emerge from this fight alive.

In the midst of the din I felt a tug at my sleeve. "You are wanted at headquarters at once!" the colonel's orderly shouted in my ear.

Notifying Sergeant Pirov, I left the line and made my way to the spot where our horses were stalled, well behind the lines.

"What's the idea?" I asked the orderly, as we mounted and started back.

"I don't know. Some one at headquarters wants to see you. Think it's your father!"

"My father!" I repeated, pulling so hard on my horse's bridle that the animal reared on his hind legs. Instantly the thought ran through my head that my military career was over—my father had come to take me back to civil life. Perhaps I would be ordered home without even a chance to say good-by to my comrades.

At the thought of my comrades, engaged in one of the most desperate battles we had so far encountered, I wheeled around and started back for our lines.

I had proceeded only a few yards when I heard a voice yell, "Back—for your life!" Pay-

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

ing no attention to the warning, I continued on my way.

The next moment a huge shell swept past my head and everything went red before my eyes. I felt a choking sensation in my throat and nose. My horse fell from underneath me, and then I knew no more.

## XV

### I MEET THE CZAR

WHEN I regained consciousness I found myself lying on six chairs arranged as a couch. Some one was washing my face with a wet towel, some one else was making me inhale some kind of gas, and my arms were being worked up and down like pump-handles. It was my father and two sanitars. I opened my mouth to speak, but the words wouldn't come.

My throat was paralyzed!

"Don't be scared, Pavlik!" my father counseled. "It will be several days before you will be able even to whisper—but your voice will come back all right. In the mean while you'll have to use pencil and paper."

In that way, in due course, I had to ask and answer all the numerous questions that we had to exchange. In that way I learned that I was suffering from shell-shock caused by the shell which had passed so close to me and had thrown me from my horse. I was not otherwise injured.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

I was lying in the dining-room of the Radziwili-chiski Station.

Of my trip from the front to Petrograd, where I next found myself, I have but a very hazy and probably inaccurate recollection. My memory was sadly shaken by the shock I had sustained. As I recall it, I traveled all the way in the coal-bin of a locomotive, which I shared with about fifty other wounded soldiers, forty-nine of whom were piled right on top of me! There was an incessant chorus of groans and curses, to both of which I contributed generously. I know it is quite out of the question, but the way I recall that journey it seems that it took about seven months and that none of us had a thing to eat or drink all that time, nor could any of us move from the positions in which we were originally dumped. That is the best I can say for that homeward trip, but my impression, as I have said, was probably colored by a fevered imagination.

I awoke in a hospital ward, in a bed which my father had donated to the 247th City Lazaret [Hospital] in Petrograd. My father and mother and Boris and Raymonde, my sister, were all around me, but I was still unable to talk. My power of speech came back very gradually.

It was two months before I was able to speak normally. During that period I traveled from one resort to another. When my power of

## I MEET THE CZAR

speech returned I visited my father, who was now stationed at the front in the city of Dvinsk.

While at Dvinsk I formed a friendship with an aviator named Strebnitzsky, and it was not long before I had induced him to take me up on a flying trip. . I had never been up before, and ten minutes after we left the earth I was quite decided that I never wanted to go up again!

Strebnitzsky wanted to show me what an accomplished aviator he was, and he started to do all sorts of tricks. I grabbed my seat for dear life. My heart was in my mouth and so were my knees most of the time. The noise of the engine was so great that he didn't hear me yell to him that I had had enough—or if he did he didn't seem to agree with me. It was not until he started to volplane to earth and shut off his engine that I was able to make myself heard.

"I want to get back, Strebnitzsky, just as quickly as you can make it!" I declared, as firmly as my shaking voice would permit.

"Well, we're going one hundred miles an hour now, but, of course, if you're in a hurry, why—"

I couldn't stop him. He started his engine and turned the nose of the 'plane almost perpendicularly down, the earth flew up to meet us, and then there was a tremendous crash! No, we had not hit the earth full force. If we had I wouldn't be here to-day. As a matter of fact,

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

Strebnitzsky had made a perfect landing, but in skimming along the surface one of our wings had struck a rising in the ground, and we had been brought to a stop abruptly as the wing collapsed.

A crowd gathered around us and pulled us out. I felt an unnatural beard on my chin and, putting my hand to it, pulled out a sharp sliver of wood that had penetrated the flesh to the mouth! As I pulled it out the blood flowed freely. I ran as fast as my legs would carry me to my father's quarters, stitches were taken in my chin, and I was bandaged up so that only my eyes could be seen, and in that condition I returned once again to Petrograd, firmly convinced that the earth furnished all the excitement I should ever want without venturing into the air.

During the months that followed I resumed my violin and general studies and spent a lot of time playing for various war charities. If I couldn't fight, I could at least help to provide the sinews of war. In due course my two war-crosses and my decoration came from the War Department and I received an honorable discharge from my regiment.

Then I received word from the Imperial Palace that I was to play before some wounded noblemen who were being cared for at the palace of the Czar! The Czar! That was something that I had long dreamed about, but, although I

## I MEET THE CZAR

had frequently played before nobility, I had never received such an honor.

In the days that intervened before the great hour arrived I conjured up all sorts of pictures of the scene in which I was to play the star rôle. I had a vision of the Czar falling to his knees under the spell of my magic bow and begging my forgiveness for the way he had treated the Jewish people, and then, in a less optimistic frame of mind, I had seen myself making a terrible exhibition and causing the Czar so much distress that I was consigned to Siberia for life!

At length the day arrived. When I reached the palace I was passed on from one secretary to another and conducted from one room to another until I was completely bewildered. Finally I came to the room where the concert was to be held. A general came to me and explained exactly how I was to conduct myself in the presence of the Czar.

"You will just answer the questions that are asked you, Iogolevitch. You will volunteer nothing!" he directed.

The seats were occupied for the most part by wounded officers of noble families. When Princess Olga, the eldest daughter of the Czar, entered, I was presented to her. I bowed as low as I could, as I had seen the others do, and then the Princess asked me what I was going to play,

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

and I gave her the names of a few numbers, one of them, I remember, being Sarasate's Gipsy Airs, Op. 20.

Then the Czar entered the room and everybody stood up. His Majesty made a few remarks and then the general beckoned for me to come down from the platform and approach the Czar. I did not know what to do with my violin, as the piano was in the other corner, so I deposited it on the platform and descended to the floor.

When I was presented to the Czar that monarch held out his hand in a most unexpected democratic fashion. That was something I had not expected. I didn't know whether to grasp it or not, but as there seemed to be nothing else to do, I seized it and shook it gingerly.

"We are proud to have a son like you, young man," the Czar declared, "and we thank you for coming to play for our wounded heroes."

Then, at a sign from the general, I went back to the platform, feeling a little more at ease, and went through with the concert. As I played I thought once or twice of my experience at the bridge at Savendiki, with Hun bayonets pressed against my sides as I performed on the instrument with two strings!

When it was all over I was called again to the Czar and invited to tell of my war experiences.

I went through some of the more interesting

## I MEET THE CZAR

incidents briefly, and then, realizing my opportunity and having gained courage as I proceeded, I added that I was not the only Jew who was fighting for Russia.

"There are thousands of others, your Majesty, who volunteered and who are willingly sacrificing their lives for Russia, and—"

The general coughed and indicated by a frown and a nod of his head that I had said just about enough. I stopped abruptly, and then I was led into an adjoining room where tea was being served.

Every time I put my cup to my lips it seemed some new member of the royal family entered the room and I had to put it down again and rise to my feet. This happened so many times that I finally decided to wait for my afternoon tea until I got home, and then the door opened again and the Czarina entered. I was led over to her and presented by the general.

The Czarina gave me her hand, which I kissed. Then she asked me something, but before I could find the words to answer her she turned her back on me. I looked at the general, wondering what was the proper course in such a case, but I got no help from him, and so I answered the question just the same as if my royal questioner had been polite enough to await my reply. Then the Czarina said a few words to the assembled throng and left.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

Just as the time came for me to go Princess Olga came to me and thanked me for my playing.

Two weeks later I received a letter from her in which she asked me to come to the Winter Palace at Petrograd, and when I arrived there, accordingly, I was presented with a diamond star, which, she said, was a gift from the Czar.

## XVI

### REVOLUTION!

I HAD about decided that my military career was over when, on March 11, 1917, I looked through the windows of our house and saw evidences of great excitement. Workmen were running through the streets carrying huge signs bearing such inscriptions as:

“We want bread!”

“Down with the lines!”

The latter demand referred to the annoyance and suffering caused by the food and clothing rationing system. Ever since the early days of the war practically all commodities had been distributed by the card system. We had to have cards for everything—bread, meat, butter, sugar, clothes, coal, in fact, all the necessities of life. Luxuries were almost entirely barred.

These restrictions, while necessary, bore particularly hard on the poor. The rich found ways of evading them. Through various channels they succeeded in getting more and better things than they were entitled to, and even

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

when they took their place in line it was their servants and not themselves who had to endure the personal discomfort of the long, weary wait. For the poor, however, it was a case of wait in line or go without.

In those days, coming home late at night, I had sometimes seen the bread-line forming for the following morning's allotment. The poor devils were preparing to stand in line all through the night so as to be served as quickly as possible in the morning when the distribution began. If this had happened only occasionally, it would perhaps have made little impression, but it had been going on for months now and began to look like a permanent institution.

The demand "down with the lines" meant far more than it signified on its face. It was a demand for equality and freedom, a protest against privilege, an appeal for the leveling of classes.

When I saw what was going on in the streets I knew that trouble was ahead. The very fact that the populace dared to gather in the streets, which was strictly against the law told me that a crisis had arrived.

A moment later I noticed the police arrive on the scene. They were mounted, and dashed right into the crowds in an effort to disperse them. A crowd is always powerless against horses, and this one fled before the advancing officers.

## REVOLUTION!

I ran into the street to find out what it was all about.

"Better get back into the house, Mr. Paul!" our porter warned. "There will be shooting in a minute. These people demand bread and the government offers them bullets and jail if they don't get back to work!"

Running back into the house, I talked the situation over with Boris. He was the only member of my family in town. The others were in Finland. After we had had lunch we decided to call up some of our friends and all go out together to watch developments.

One of my chums, a boy named Vassia, said he would meet us, and out we went to join him.

In the streets we saw government notices posted up on the walls, signed by the military governor of the state, demanding perfect order in the streets, forbidding gatherings, and warning the workmen to stick to their jobs in the government ammunition-factories under penalty of being sent forthwith to the front-line trenches.

Apparently these notices were not taken very seriously. Everywhere we went crowds were assembled. There didn't seem to be any particular program. The men and women gathered, it seemed, merely to show their defiance.

"It looks as if the government was afraid to carry its threats into effect," I was saying to Boris and Vassia, who had joined us, when a

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

patrol of mounted police came galloping down the street and fired a volley of shots point-blank into a crowd on the corner.

There was a wild scramble to get out of range, but a dozen or more had fallen to the ground and were writhing in agony. There were cries of pain, alarm, and defiance. We hurried out of the way, but wherever we went similar scenes were enacted. Everywhere was evident a spirit of resistance and open defiance to the police which was entirely new to Russia.

"What does it all mean?" I asked Boris.

"Revolution! The day has come!" he replied.

Although I and the rest of my family had always been loyal subjects of the Czar, we were not unmindful of the wide-spread and deeply rooted grievances which the Russian people nursed against the monarchy. Every Russian felt that some day there would be an end to Czarism, with all its abuses and outrages. When the war broke out, of course, national questions were subordinated to the one pressing problem of defeating the enemy Hun, but no one imagined that the Czar's position would be any stronger after the war than before.

For the past two months outspoken charges had been made in the Duma against the government. The representatives of the people demanded a Cabinet that was responsible to them.

A PATROL OF MOUNTED POLICE CAME GALLOPING DOWN THE STREET AND FIRED A VOLLEY OF SHOTS POINT-

BLANK INTO A CROWD ON A CORNER



## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

That some of the men in high office were working hand in hand with the enemy was freely charged. These speeches had struck a most responsive chord in my breast, for I had seen Russians led to the slaughter through the treachery of our High Command.

If, then, this was the beginning of a real revolution—the revolution that we had all thought would be postponed until after the war—I was not at all sure that I would not throw my lot in with the revolutionists, but I said nothing at the time to Boris.

Late that afternoon, when Boris and I were returning home all alone, disorder and confusion reigned everywhere. The streets were jammed with soldiers and policemen. Street-cars were lying on their sides. Shop windows were smashed. Red Cross wagons and hospital ambulances were in evidence everywhere. Here and there fire-engines were putting out minor fires. Rifle- and pistol-shots were constantly heard. The police stations had been attacked and burned. Their records were strewn about in the streets.

These scenes were repeated the following day. We were not quite sure just what it all signified. Was it just a severe riot that would be squelched at the cost of a few lives or was it something of a more vital character?

The newspapers were very guarded in their

## REVOLUTION!

accounts of the trouble. Reading between the lines, one might gather that the rioting was the beginning of the end, but it was not stated in so many words.

The following day, however, all doubt was dissipated. It was indeed THE REVOLUTION! Boris and I talked it all over in the security of our home, and the conclusion we came to was that if the majority had decided to overthrow the Czar, we would become revolutionists without any question.

That day we received a telegram from our father, who was in command of a medical division in Helsingfors, Finland. He told us to join him there at once. My mother and sister were already with him, and he said he didn't want us to take part in the fighting in Petrograd.

Leaving instructions with the servants to take care of the house, we each took a revolver and made our way to the railway station.

It was pretty hard sledding. The police, who had been supplied by the government with all the machine-guns they needed, had planted them at the head of most of the streets and were using them freely to kill and terrorize the population. At the front, where our soldiers were lined up against the common enemy, disaster had frequently overtaken them because of the failure of the government to supply them with needed ammunition, but here, when it was a question

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

of killing our own people, the government seemed to be amply supplied. This thought came to me as we progressed from house to house, choosing the byways and side-streets in an effort to escape the attention of the police, who would not hesitate to fire even at a child who happened to wander into the danger zone!

To get to the "Finliandsky Wokzal," the railway station for Finland, it was necessary to make wide detours, because many of the bridges over the Neva River had been closed to traffic by the police in their efforts to control the crowds.

When we finally arrived at the station we found ourselves face to face with a row of machine-guns which, the day before, we learned, had spread a stream of fire across the square which fronted it, and which looked ready to open up again upon any who dared to venture toward them. Rather than take a chance of being made a target, we went through an adjoining house and in that way got to the railway tracks, which we found to be in possession of revolutionary forces.

Approaching one of the leaders, who was wearing a captain's uniform, Boris explained that we were anxious to get to Helsingfors to spread the news of the happenings in Petrograd.

The college student's uniform which Boris wore was sufficient credentials to satisfy the

## REVOLUTION!

most rabid radical, and the captain listened to us patiently.

"I would certainly like to help you, *tovareszch* [comrade]," he replied, "but there are no trains running to the Finland boundary-line just now. If you want to walk the twenty-five miles it will be easy to get a train from that point. But, let me see, how would a hand-car do?"

That, we said, would suit us very well, and it was accordingly arranged. Three soldiers accompanied us and took it in turns to work the car. The journey took us two hours and at several points we were fired on by government soldiers.

At Bieloostrof, the border city, we got a train to Helsingfors. Everything was quiet in the Finnish city. There was no sign of a revolution. Without any trouble we got to the armory where father was stationed. The armory, a tremendous old building, was situated near the harbor. There were large courts inside and soldiers were drilling. Mother and Raymonde were staying at a resort near by, and father suggested that the following day we should pay a visit to them to set their minds at rest.

Father's fellow-officers were very much interested in our account of the revolution at Petrograd.

"Nothing will come of it, however!" said one captain. "In a few days it will all blow over,

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

the ringleaders will be executed, and the rank and file will go back to their jobs and try to escape punishment for their participation in the affair."

The others seemed to agree with him, but Boris and I, who had observed the temper of the people, did not share their opinion.

That night I went to a play. Just as the climax was being enacted there came the sound of shots in the street. The audience rose and made for the doors, as though the theater had been on fire. There was a wild panic. The weak were thrown to the floor and women became hysterical. I was not in uniform, and, although I shouted for the people to be calm, my voice was drowned in the general hubbub.

"You are perfectly safe in here!" I shouted.  
"You may be shot if you go outside!"

My warning did no good. The people just jammed their way through the doors and I was swept along with them. Out in the street I drew my revolver, but I saw no occasion to use it. In the glare of the electric lights from illuminated signs I saw thousands of people running frantically up and down with apparently no set purpose. Soldiers mingled with the crowd, but whether they were with the crowd or against it, it was impossible for me to discern.

I hurried to the armory. Outside was an

## REVOLUTION!

officer and about thirty soldiers. They refused to let me in.

"My father is inside," I explained to the officer.

"That makes no difference. My orders are to allow no one to enter without a special pass."

I walked nervously around the armory. Crowds of people were gathered on the corner. Among them I heard the rumor that the sailors on the ships which were stationed in the harbor were about to bombard the armory if the infantry stationed in the building did not immediately join them in the revolt.

Hurrying back to the gate to notify the officer of what I had heard, I found my father arguing with him. After some further parley I was allowed to enter.

The officers inside were gathered in my father's bedroom, eagerly discussing the situation, and through the window which overlooked the court we could see the soldiers similarly engaged.

The soldiers had heard, it seemed, that the Czar had abdicated and they were angry because the announcement had not come to them officially. Voices became louder and louder.

Suddenly one of the men burst into our room to report that the mob, led by some sailors, were at the gate and were preparing to rush the armory.

"Seize the officers! Lynch them! They are

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

the cause of our suffering! We want no more officers!"

These cries could now be distinguished and confirmed the soldier's report. Some of the officers in the room turned white. No doubt many of them deserved the punishment that now threatened and they figured that their end had come.

They all looked to father for advice. He was not only the oldest and most experienced among them, but he was perfectly calm.

"Let us go out and mingle with the men," he counseled. "If we stay here, they will naturally think we are opposed to them!"

Another soldier made his way into our room.

"Captain Borovsky has been seized and lynched!" he shouted.

The information added to the nervousness among us. Then word came through officially that the Czar had indeed abdicated. The news had been held back for twenty-four hours because the government realized that as soon as it became known many of the officers, no longer bound to the monarch they had sworn to serve, would join the revolutionists.

When the soldiers were informed that the Czar had abdicated they quieted down somewhat, but they still insisted that certain of the officers should be arrested and held for trial. Some of the officers who had incurred the men's dis-

## REVOLUTION!

pleasure yielded at once and were carried away; others, who held back, were seized and dealt with summarily.

The next morning we heard rumors of the penalties that had been meted out to the captured officers. The commander of the navy, it was said, had been thrust under the ice and drowned. Other officers were disposed of in the manner which seemed most appropriate to their self-appointed judges, the men who had suffered most at their hands.

Boris and I decided to return to Petrograd and ally ourselves with the revolutionists, and with our father's permission we left the armory, promising to stop off to see mother.

Walking through the streets of Helsingfors we noticed many agitators in civilian clothes and in uniform giving money to the soldiers and supplying them with liquor. Every effort was being made, apparently, to urge the men on to greater excesses and give the uprising the appearance of anarchy. From the accent of these agitators there was no mistaking their German affiliations. As the Finnish borders were then unguarded, it was easy enough for German agents to get into that country and foment the rebellion against the government.

We spent but a few hours with our mother and sister and then started back to Petrograd in much the same way as we had come.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

In the Russian capital we found the revolution had made great headway. A new form of government had been established by the Constitutional Democrats. Every one was talking about Kerensky, who had assumed an important place in the new government.

Scenes of violence were frequent, only now it was the police who were the victims, not the populace. They had not hesitated to shoot down men, women, and children who demanded bread, and now that the people were in power they were made to pay the penalty for their crimes. It was generally believed that supplies had been freely given to the enemy by traitors high up in the Russian councils, while the Russian people were allowed to starve, and when they protested they were shot down by the police. Incidentally it was discovered that the police were drawing salaries out of all proportion to their normal wages.

We found that the city was without any real protection and private property was at the mercy of the lawless. Boris and I and a number of our friends decided that we could be most useful by acting as a sort of home-guard, and we laid our plans accordingly, dividing our district up into separate watches. Without ammunition, however, we were not strong enough to cope with the rowdyism that was getting worse every day.

## REVOLUTION!

Kerensky was a friend of my father's and I went to him and explained what the boys of my district wanted to do.

"I am glad that you boys are so willing to help maintain order," he said, "but I have already arranged to form a regular militia to take the place of the old police, and perhaps you and your friends will be able to join that."

When I got back home I called a meeting of the people of our neighborhood and pointed out to them how necessary it was for us to protect our homes. There were a number of young fellows in Petrograd who, because of the government positions they occupied, had never gone to the front, although they were able-bodied and would have made good soldiers.

"Protecting our own homes is the first duty of each of us," I pointed out. "It may not be a particularly pleasant job to stand on guard through the night, but at the present time the city is entirely without protection and thugs and rowdies are taking advantage of the situation. If we want to safeguard our property and our lives, it is up to us to protect ourselves!"

The little speech I made aroused some enthusiasm and it was arranged that every able-bodied man should take his turn at police work.

A couple of days later the militia which Kerensky had spoken of was formed and I was

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

put in charge of the local headquarters of our district. Three prominent lawyers who lived in our neighborhood were appointed as judges and one of the private houses was converted into headquarters. Service in the militia was voluntary, but at the first call I received a large number of enlistments, mostly college boys, high-school students, and ex-soldiers.

We received arms and ammunition from the city armory and jumped into the work with a good deal of enthusiasm. Some of the younger boys, however, did not take the work very seriously. They liked to carry rifles and ride the horses which I had procured for many of them, but we found that they sometimes neglected their duty.

My experience in the army had taught me that discipline and strict attention to duty are essential in all military organizations, and the failings of some of my boys worried me not a little.

Then some one suggested to me that I press the Boy Scouts into service.

"In our district," he said, "the Boy Scouts have been doing some wonderful work, and I don't know why you couldn't use them with the same result."

I knew, of course, that while these boys averaged not more than sixteen years of age, they would command the respect of the populace

## REVOLUTION!

because of their education. Most of them were gymnasium students. In Russia, where education is enjoyed only by the few, a gymnasium boy of sixteen or even fifteen is looked upon with more deference than would be shown a boy five years older anywhere else in the world. It was a common thing in Petrograd at this time—indeed it had been so always—to see a crowd of people accept the leadership of a boy of fifteen or sixteen.

For these reasons I had no doubt of the important part that the Boy Scout organization in Russia would be called upon to play in the task of maintaining order.

The Boy Scout headquarters in our district was located in Kirochnaia Ulitsa Street, and I immediately got in touch with them. In answer to my inquiry, they informed me that they would be very glad to shoulder part of the responsibility of guarding the district, and that very day fifty boys, under Chief-Scout Sergei Chernov, reported at our headquarters.

They were a fine-looking lot of boys. In their new uniforms they had a trim, military appearance, and, while they were all well under eighteen years of age, they acted like men.

"Do your boys understand," I asked of Sergei Chernov, "that the work we are going to ask them to do allows of very little time for pleasure? We don't watch the clock in this game and there

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

is considerable danger involved in it. It is going to be a case of all work and no play for a while, I imagine."

"Our uniforms, *commissar*, stand for cheerfulness, courage, obedience, and service," was the leader's prompt response.

The boys were supplied with rifles, pistols, and ammunition, and we had horses for some of them. For a day or two only ordinary routine work was required. There were a certain number of hours of patrol for each of us, and then a few hours off on reserve duty. An occasional clash with rioters broke the monotony, but there was nothing of a very serious character.

But as the days went by conditions in Petrograd grew worse. The prisons had been thrown open to release political prisoners, but, of course, the criminals escaped, too. Robberies and hold-ups were hourly occurrences. No one's life was safe. It was a case of might makes right, and we realized that our work was cut out for us.

Our militiamen suffered at the hands of the lawbreakers. The criminals used automobiles to a great extent. They were able to make rapid sorties against our armed guards and disappear after firing a few volleys from the windows of the car. In this way many of our boys fell at their posts without even getting a chance to fire back at their assailants.

I attended a meeting of all the local *com-*

## REVOLUTION!

*missars* and we notified Kerensky of the situation. As a result 1,200 soldiers were put at our disposal to use in case of emergency.

To cope with the motor-bandits, I ordered that all cars without lights should be stopped and examined and that every automobile-driver should be compelled to procure and show a special permit to drive at night.

This measure only made matters worse. Sergei Chernov reported to me that his boys were being kidnapped by the terrorists.

"They come driving down the streets at a terrific pace," he said, "and when our Scout steps out into the middle of the street and challenges them they slow down, invite the guard to step to the car to inspect their permits, and as soon as he approaches them they seize him and carry him off!"

I was at a loss to know how to guard against this menace.

"Let me suggest something, Paul," said Chernov, with whom I had become quite intimate. "Let us station our men by twos in the dark streets, instead of singly. Then, while one of our men is examining the driver's permit the other can stand by and cover the occupants of the car, and prevent any funny business."

This plan sounded so sensible that we immediately put it into execution, and it worked as well as it sounded. No more Boy Scouts were

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

kidnapped, while, on the other hand, we arrested many of the most vicious characters who had been terrorizing the neighborhood.

Besides guarding the streets, our work involved raiding the hang-outs of criminal bands and bodies of anti-revolutionists. We had many desperate fights in different sections of the town, but with the help of the soldiers whom Kerensky placed at our disposal we invariably got the best of it.

The worst fight of this character occurred in the slums of the city, where we had to keep a house on the Obvodny Canal surrounded for thirty-two hours before we finally broke in and captured the inmates. There were more than three hundred men and women, many of them fully armed, in our capture. Besides the prisoners we secured thousands of rifles, a great deal of ammunition which had apparently been stolen from the arsenals, and a lot of apparatus for manufacturing alcohol and counterfeit money.

After three and one-half weeks of this sort of work my mother and sister arrived in Petrograd and begged me to give it up and resume my musical career. To humor them I resigned, and Chief-Scout Chernov became *commissar* in my place. He was a brave boy and had all the qualities of leadership. In addition to that he was very popular with the

## REVOLUTION!

rest of the boys and they would do anything he asked of them.

Little by little, under Kerensky's rule, order was re-established in the city. All the former heads and officials of the government were placed under arrest and held for trial, and the policemen of the old régime were sent to the front lines as soldiers.

Boris, who had taken an active part in the work of the militia, went back to college and I resumed my studying.

Under Kerensky's leadership a new offensive against the Huns was rapidly being developed, and we began to hope that Russia would once again become an important factor in the Great War.

Unfortunately, however, the simple-hearted Russians were readily fooled by the intrigues of the Germans, who, under flags of truce, managed to get into our trenches and carry on their infamous work.

Everywhere I went I saw the evidences of German propaganda.

Fooled by the fair words of the Hun agitators, our workmen abandoned their jobs in the munition-factories. I knew what that meant to our boys at the front. It made me sick at heart to recall the frightful scenes of panic and disorder into which our troops had been thrown because of treachery in our High Command,

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

and when I saw how successfully the Huns were working their way into the inner councils of the new government I knew that all the well-laid plans of Kerensky and other faithful workers would go for naught.

The Battalion of Death, composed of Russian women, was demonstrating that our women were not afraid to shed their blood for the cause, and millions of our men who were intelligent enough to see through the German trickery were willing enough to carry on, but without ammunition and supplies all their noble sacrifices were in vain, and German propaganda in Petrograd was making more converts every day.

The outlook, as I saw it, was very gloomy. I would gladly have gone to the front again to serve under Kerensky, but I felt that our cause was doomed. I was thoroughly ashamed at the way our men were acting. Apparently they had forgotten the long list of crimes that the Huns had committed, and when the enemy offered a truce they weakly accepted it, while our allies were straining every nerve and fiber to beat Germany.

I thought of the noble stand America had taken. The idea of Americans traveling three thousand miles across the ocean to fight for an ideal, while my own countrymen were laying down their arms, forgetful of what their comrades had suffered and were still suffer-

## REVOLUTION!

ing at the hands of the Hun, spurred me into action.

The Russian eagle had given up the fight, but in far-off America there was an eagle of another species that was flapping her wings and making ready for the fray.

I would leave everything and enlist under the flag of the U. S. A.

## XVII

### ACROSS SIBERIA

GETTING out of Russia was by no means an easy task. My plan was to get to Vladivostok and from there take a steamer to Japan. The trip across the continent took eleven days and it was necessary, of course, to secure sleeping accommodations.

When I went to the ticket-office to make the necessary arrangements I found a long line of people waiting. I took my place in the line and waited hour after hour, but the ticket-office closed for the day before I was taken care of, and rather than go through the same performance again the next day I decided to remain in line all through the night, as the others were doing.

The next day, however, the same thing occurred. When the ticket-window was closed for the day I was still several hundred feet away from it. Fortunately, some of my Boy Scout friends saw me standing in line and volunteered to hold my place for me while I got some rest,

## ACROSS SIBERIA

and in that way, in course of time, I finally got my ticket. It took me fifty-two hours to get it, but if it had taken fifty-two days I would have stuck to my post, because I was determined to leave the country and get to America to take another whack at the Huns.

A few days later, with a small trunk containing my uniform, medals, documents, and other personal belongings and a case containing my violin, I left Petrograd.

On the train I struck up an acquaintance with an engineer whom I came to call George. I forget what his last name was. George was bound for Vladivostok on some government business. He was a very fine young man and we became very close friends. We couldn't help being "close" because our compartment, which was intended to hold only two passengers, was made to accommodate seven. Five soldiers crowded their way into it and we were jammed so tight that it was very hard for us to get into the corridor to go to the dining-room, and we got our meals by jumping out of the windows when the train stopped at stations.

All along the railway lines, at the more important stations on the Trans-Siberian Railroad, the trains stopped for from ten to thirty minutes. To get out and rush for the restaurant, grab a sandwich or a plate of *borsch* or *schie* and run back to the train with a handful of *pirojki*—

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

small roll-like cakes made of butter-dough and filled with meat, cheese, or jelly—became one of the most exciting features of our trip during the first three or four days while we were passing through central Russia.

It was very monotonous traveling until we reached the Ural Mountains. Mile after mile of wheat-fields was all we had seen for two days, but now we were going through the great mining areas. There were enormous mountains on either side of the rails. As our train wound its way along the zigzag tracks we could frequently look through our rear-car windows and see the front of our train.

At one moment we were going down a grade so steep that we wondered why the cars did not pile up on top of one another, and the next moment we were climbing a mountain-side at such a slow gait that we felt like getting out and walking. It was all very beautiful, and we would have enjoyed it immensely had it not been for the crowded condition of the train which made comfortable traveling out of the question.

After we had traversed the Ural Mountains and entered Siberia we plunged into the great Taiga Forest. Here was a part of Russia which was practically unexplored. Thousands and thousands of square miles of timberland untouched by the hand of man and, for the most

## ACROSS SIBERIA

part, unvisited except by hunters, spread before us. I had read how these hunters penetrate the forest in their quest for fur skins. The region is so far beyond the pale of civilization that it is necessary to take a supply of provisions to last for months. In the winter, when the hunting is best, the cold is so intense and the snow so deep that many a hunter perishes. Their food consists of frozen *borsch* (soup) which lasts for months, nature providing the ice-box.

While we were still in this wild section of the continent we came to a bridge. The train was about in the center of it when our car gave a sudden jerk and seemed to rise in the air.

"Pull the emergency brake!" yelled George, who had sensed what had happened.

I was standing near the emergency rope and pulled it, and the next moment everything crashed about us. The windows were smashed and the trunks and other baggage fell from their stands. I crouched in the corner of the compartment, waiting for the end. Our car was wabbling from one side of the bridge to the other, and I expected it at any moment to go over the side and land in the cañon hundreds of feet below!

There was a terrific noise. People were screaming, the train was pounding the sides of the bridge, glass was crashing, and the wooden

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

cars were being splintered. The brakes held the wheels so firmly that they couldn't revolve, and as they slid along the tracks the friction splintered the rails.

Finally we came to a stop. Our car was standing end up! Those of us who were still conscious were afraid to breathe for fear of upsetting the balance.

The whole thing probably didn't take a minute, but it seemed like hours to me, and I know that at least a million thoughts flitted through my mind in that short space of time. Above them all was the natural reflection, "After all I have successfully escaped, am I at last to perish in a miserable old train accident?"

George was the first to extricate himself. He laughed nervously as he climbed out of the car window and I tumbled after him. When I landed on the tracks I found that we had succeeded in crossing the bridge, which was piled high with wood, glass, iron, and other debris.

Some of the men and women who had been standing on the platform had lost their nerve at the first crash and jumped. All had been severely injured or killed. From the front cars of the train, which had not left the tracks, the passengers and conductors came running toward us. Telephone wires were tapped and communication established with Krasnoyarsk, the nearest big city. Doctors and nurses were immediately

## ACROSS SIBERIA

sent out to take care of the injured, and wrecking-crews arrived to repair the bridge and tracks.

In the mean while our baggage had been recovered and transferred to the front cars, and we continued on our journey, more crowded than ever. The accident, we learned, had been caused by the overcrowding of the rear cars, which had put too much pressure on the trucks and one of them had collapsed.

When we reached Krasnoyarsk George and I were still so shaken up from our experience that we decided to break our journey for a day or two and rest up. Krasnoyarsk was a typical Siberian city, with cobbled pavements and low wooden buildings, few more than two stories high, although the population was in the neighborhood of one hundred thousand.

We stayed there for a couple of days and then took the next train for the east.

When we came to Baikal Lake I saw again the scenes of my infancy. I was born at Verchne Udinsk, and the wonderful scenery of this region had left its impress on my mind, although we had moved to Harbin when I was only three years old.

From the shores of the lake the mountains rise almost perpendicularly. Formerly, when the Trans-Siberian Railway was first finished, the trains rode right on to ferry-boats and were

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

carried across Lake Baikal, a distance of sixty miles, but later a road was cut around the lake, right through the foot of the mountains, and it was along this picturesque route—with the mountains rising majestically on one side of the track and the clear water of the lake spreading out as far as the eye could reach on the other—that we traveled.

After we had crossed the steppes and gotten into Manchuria the character of the population changed. Here the Siberians were of the Mongolian type, but my childhood had been spent in Harbin, and I was not unfamiliar with Manchurian characteristics.

I got off at Harbin. I was anxious to renew acquaintance with the friends of my childhood, and, besides, my father had commissioned me to look over some of his property in that section of the country. George went on to Vladivostok, and I promised to look him up when I reached that city.

During the few days I stayed in Harbin I spent a lot of time with my cousins and boyhood friends, who were still at school and who were green with envy when I told them of the wonderful chance I had had to get into the fighting.

At Harbin I was able to get news of the recent developments in my country and of the terrible menace of the Hun drive on the western front,

## ACROSS SIBERIA

It reminded me of my main purpose, and I packed up my things and started off for Vladivostok. There I spent only a few hours with George, as I was able to catch a steamer just leaving for Tsuruga, Japan. From there I took a train to Yokohama. There was no steamer leaving for America for several weeks, and, impatient as I was to get once again into action, I just had to wait.

There was a lot to be seen in the Japanese city. Incidentally, I was able to raise some money for wounded soldiers by playing at concerts, and so my time was not altogether wasted. At last, about the middle of June, 1917, I secured passage on the *Shenya Maro*, a Japanese passenger steamer of some twenty-four thousand tons, bound for San Francisco, *via* Honolulu.

The voyage took about eighteen days. It was a most interesting trip, but it seemed unbearably long. Even the twenty-four hours that we spent in Honolulu, where at Young's Hotel I recognized in the orchestra a young man who had studied with me at the Conservatoire and with whom I talked over old times, seemed twenty-four hours' unnecessary delay, but at length we started off again and eventually reached San Francisco.

I shall never forget my emotions as the glad tidings of "land in sight" was spread about the boat. It meant much, I suppose, to most of

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

the people on that vessel, but to me it meant an opportunity to fight again for the great cause under a flag that had been unfurled with the most glorious motives that had ever actuated a great nation, "to make the world safe for democracy"!

## XVIII

### IN THE LAND OF THE FREE

I LANDED in San Francisco in July, 1917. Besides my native tongue, I could speak German, but German was very much in disfavor on the Pacific coast at that time, and I knew practically no English. It did not take me long to realize that my lack of English was a serious handicap. If I was to fight with American troops I would certainly have to understand the language of the country.

At the Russian consulate, to which I paid a visit very soon after I arrived, I was told that I would find it very difficult to enlist in the army, because of my age.

"An American boy of sixteen might be able to camouflage his youth and thus get by the recruiting-officers," I was told, "but you are a foreigner and will have to show your papers, which will disclose your true age."

This information was very discouraging, but it proved to be correct. When I applied at the recruiting-office on Market Street I was received

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

royally. The sergeant on duty couldn't understand exactly what I wanted, but he rightly conjectured that I wouldn't be bothering him if I didn't want to enlist, and when I showed him my medals he pulled out a long recruiting-blank and started to ask me questions.

As he knew no Russian and I knew very little English, we did not progress very far until he sent out for some one to act as interpreter. That queered it. One of the first questions I was asked was my nationality, and when they found that I was a foreigner they wanted to see my passport.

"I like your medals and I think you would make a good soldier," remarked the sergeant, ruefully, through the interpreter, "but how about this 'sixteen' years of age? I can't recruit you unless you're eighteen, and the papers here say you're only sixteen. What can you say to that?"

I could only shrug my shoulders. For two years I had been fighting for Russia, but apparently I was not yet old enough to fight for Uncle Sam.

I recalled the consul's remark regarding American boys of sixteen. A white lie would be sufficient to solve the problem for them. Apparently the only thing for me to do was to pass myself off as an American. To do that I would have to be able to speak English. If I

## IN THE LAND OF THE FREE

stuck to it, I might acquire the language in a couple of months. That was the only thing for me to do.

With this plan in mind, I decided to return to Honolulu, where, with the help of my Russian friend, I believed I could rapidly master the English language and could then renew my efforts to enlist, with a better chance of success.

I took the first steamer that sailed for the Hawaiian Islands, and for the next two months I remained at Honolulu, supporting myself by playing at concerts which my friend arranged for me. There I met a Doctor Straub, who took a great interest in me and did everything he could to further my plans. After two months' study my English had greatly improved, but, at Doctor Straub's suggestion, I returned to San Francisco to continue my studies there. Through his assistance I joined the Technical High School at Oakland, where I put in a good month.

The American Red Cross was actively engaged at that time in raising funds, and, as I was still unable to fight for the cause as a soldier, I decided that I could at least do my bit with my violin. Music was a language that every one understood and one that I could speak better than any other. Through friends that I had made, I volunteered to play at various Red

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

Cross functions, and in that way I met a number of prominent San Francisco people.

Coming back from Honolulu, I had gotten into conversation with the barber on the boat, and when he learned that I was a Russian violinist he suggested that I call to see a friend of his, a Mr. J. Mortimer Smythe, as soon as I got to San Francisco.

"Mr. Smythe is a wonderful concert manager," he explained. "If he consents to take charge of you, your fortune will be made."

At the first available opportunity, therefore, I called on Mr. Smythe. He was living at one of the big hotels. He became very enthusiastic after I had played for him.

"My boy," he said, affectionately, patting me on the shoulder, "you are a wonderful violinist. With your war record as a foundation, you can make a lot of money in this country—under the proper management."

I told him that money-making was not my present object.

"I came here to fight for America," I replied. "Until I am eligible for the American army, I want to serve in whatever capacity will mean the most for the cause. Through my violin I can raise funds for the Red Cross and similar organizations. For them I would like to make as much money as possible out of my violin-playing, but for myself I do not want to make a fortune!"

## IN THE LAND OF THE FREE

"You talk like a foolish boy!" he exclaimed. "Of course you should play for the Red Cross. That is right. Also you should make some money for yourself. Charity begins at home, doesn't it? Come and see me to-morrow, my boy, and we will draw up a little contract, and I will arrange a big concert for you at once!"

There was something about the man that made me suspicious of him. Although he had a name that sounded English enough, his accent was anything but English, and a large tin box which I observed on top of a closet in his room suggested to me the probable answer. On it was lettered:

"J. M. SCHMIDT."

Feeling so lukewarm regarding this Mr. J. Mortimer Smythe, I did not go to see him the next day or the day after. A day or two later, however, he called to see me and made me a most alluring offer. He said he would arrange sixty concerts for me during the year and would give me half the proceeds, guaranteeing me no less than thirty thousand dollars for the year!

Thirty thousand dollars! That was certainly a lot of money. If everything was square and aboveboard, it seemed to me that I ought to take advantage of the offer.

Smythe had with him a contract which he

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

wanted me to sign then and there, but I told him to leave it with me that I might study it.

The next day I took the contract to the Russian consul and he pointed out a number of features in it that ought to be changed.

"The way it now stands," he explained, "Smythe can hold you, but you cannot hold him to it—although, of course, the fact that you are only sixteen would let you out of the contract, anyway."

I took the contract to Smythe the next day and told him of the changes I wanted made. He got very mad and said I was a silly boy.

"I may be a silly boy," I replied, "but I'm not silly enough to sign this contract the way you have it. If you will make the changes that I ask, I will sign it."

When he brought me the contract again, the following day, I told him that I would have to take a day or two to study it—which meant, of course, a chance to submit it to my friend the consul.

Again I had to ask for certain changes and again Smythe got angry, threatening to tear the whole thing to pieces.

"You make me very mad, Iogolevitch," he said. "You are a very foolish boy. You will sign the contract the way it is or you will have to find another manager!"

When he saw that I was not very upset at his

## IN THE LAND OF THE FREE

threat he changed his tactics and became very amiable, making all the corrections I demanded and assuring me that I would never regret having entered into business relations with him.

I at once moved into Smythe's hotel and from that time on all my bills were charged to him. He had some photographs taken of me and got out some literature featuring me as the "famous Russian violinist."

Under his auspices I played at several concerts given for the benefit of Red Cross and similar organizations—at least, that was the way the announcements always read. As a matter of fact, I soon found out that these concerts were given mainly for the benefit of J. Mortimer Smythe and Paul Iogolevitch. We got the lion's share of the proceeds, and the trifling balance went to the charitable or patriotic cause which my audience really intended to patronize.

The more I thought over this phase of my work the less I liked it. In a way it was taking money under false pretenses. Tickets were bought by people because they thought the money was going to a worthy organization. They had no idea of contributing to my support or to Smythe's. The proposition didn't seem on the square to me, and I spoke to Smythe about it.

"Now don't you worry about that end of it, Paul," he answered, good-naturedly. "You're

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

a musician, not a business man. That's why you have to have a manager—that's why you pay me half you make to show you how to make it. You just stick to your violin and leave the engagements to me!"

"I don't question your ability to make profitable engagements for me," I answered. "But I am worried at the idea of making capital out of patriotic and charitable affairs. Let us give the Red Cross a fair share of the proceeds and I shall feel easier about it!"

Smythe refused to discuss the subject with me any further.

"You made a contract to play at all concerts that I would arrange for you. You are getting the fifty-fifty I agreed to pay you. That's all there is to it. Don't let us talk about this foolishness again!"

I let the matter drop then, but the next day when he told me that he was arranging a series of Red Cross concerts for me the subject came up again.

"The only hitch in the program," he said, "is the percentage. I'm holding out for seventy-five per cent. of the proceeds, and they want to give us only fifty per cent. I told them we won't play for less than seventy-five per cent., and that's final!"

"And I tell you that 'we' won't play for more than twenty-five per cent., and *that's final!*" I

## IN THE LAND OF THE FREE

replied, hotly, my mind having been made up in the mean time to take a firm stand on this question.



"YOU CALL ME A ROBBER, YOU RUSSIAN DOG!" HE SHOUTED,  
JUMPING AT ME AND SEIZING ME BY THE THROAT

"What!" he shouted. "You mean to threaten me! You will refuse to carry out your contract?"

"I will not carry out my contract if it means robbing the Red Cross!"

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

"Do you call me a robber, you Russian dog!" he shouted, jumping at me and seizing me by the throat.

I struggled to free myself, but I was helpless in his grasp. He was nearly six feet tall and very powerful, and he shook me as a cat worries a mouse, and then he threw me across the bed.

Without another word I reached for my hat and started for the door.

"Look here, young man, before you go, understand this: the contract with the Red Cross will be made the way I want it, not according to your crazy notions. The first concert will be given next Wednesday, provided they meet my terms, which I expect they will. You will be ready next Wednesday to play for the Red Cross, understand, and our share of the proceeds will be seventy-five per cent.!"

"Mr. Smythe, I will not play for you again. The way you have treated me just now would make it impossible for me to play for several weeks, anyway, but I have decided to work out my own salvation without your help. Good day!"

He sprang toward me as I closed the door, but I hurried to the elevator and was half-way down before he could get to the elevator shaft.

I did not go back to the hotel that night. Instead I slept at the house of a friend in Oakland, and I slept better because of having broken off

## IN THE LAND OF THE FREE

my relations with Smythe. The more I thought of the kind of contracts he had been making for me the more I realized how impossible it was that I could continue under his management.

The next day when I went to the hotel to get my things I was informed by the manager that my room was not available to me until I had paid my bill, which amounted to several hundred dollars.

"Mr. Smythe will pay it," I answered. "He is my manager."

"He *was* your manager, but he tells me that you have broken your contract and that I must look to you for the payment of the bill."

"I cannot pay you now," I answered. "I am not in a position to do so. But eventually, of course, if I am liable for this bill, I—"

"Well, you can do what you like about it, young man," he replied, sarcastically, "but until your bill is paid you will not be allowed into your room and we will hold on to your belongings. If you don't settle up very soon, we'll clean out the room and dispose of your things."

"Well," I retorted, hoping to scare him, "when you sell my violin see that you get a fair price for it, or I'll hold the hotel responsible for its value. It's a Stradivarius and cost twelve thousand dollars!"

Apparently the manager didn't scare much for the next day when I went to the hotel I

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

found that the room I had occupied had been assigned to some one else and all my things had indeed been removed.

I went to the manager and asked him for an explanation.

"That's Mr. Smythe's orders," he answered. "He hired the room and he gave it up."

"Well, if *he* hired the room, how can you hold my things responsible for the bill?" I asked. "If you don't deliver my property at once, I'll bring suit against the hotel."

The manager's admission that the room had been charged to Smythe had come from him inadvertently, and it made him mad to think that I had seen its significance.

"You clear out of here," he shouted, "or I'll put you out."

"But—"

"You clear out of here!"

"Just a moment. Be fair about—"

"Clear out of here!"

This time he raised his voice so loud that the house detective walked over and I realized it was useless to argue any further.

I went immediately to a Mr. Mitchell, whom I had met in connection with one of my concerts. He and his wife were two of the first Americans I had met after I landed in San Francisco, and their kindness to me did much to stimulate my love for America. Right from the start they

## IN THE LAND OF THE FREE

did everything they could to make the way easy for me, and they promised to help me whenever I needed it.

Mr. Mitchell went with me to the hotel, and after he had presented my case to the manager my things were delivered to me without another word and apologies were exacted by Mr. Mitchell. We did not see anything of Mr. Smythe, although Mr. Mitchell asked for him.

A day or two later, however, I got a letter from the city prosecuting attorney, demanding that I appear at his office at once or a warrant would be issued against me for obtaining money under false pretenses.

I went to see the prosecuting attorney. I did not know what the charge referred to, but I did not want to be thrown into prison. I knew very little about legal matters and I was afraid of them.

When I presented myself to the official he explained that a complaint had been made by J. Mortimer Smythe, stating that I had obtained board, lodging, and money from him and had then refused to carry out my part of the contract.

I explained the whole situation.

"I have made no pretenses," I urged. "I made a contract with a man who assaulted me and who seems to want to bleed the Red Cross and similar organizations, and I don't want to be

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

connected with him any more, that's all. Is that a crime in this country?"

"No, young man. If that is all there is to it, it is no crime and I will not issue a warrant, but,



"HE SEEMS TO WANT TO BLEED THE RED CROSS THAT'S ALL—IS THAT A CRIME IN THIS COUNTRY?"

of course, I cannot accept your mere word for it. Have you any friends here who can testify in your behalf?"

I told him of Mr. Mitchell.

"Why didn't you mention Mitchell at first,

## IN THE LAND OF THE FREE

young fellow? If Mitchell vouches for you, that's all I'll ask. I'll call him up."

He got Mr. Mitchell on the 'phone and asked him a few questions about me, and then he told me to go and not to bother any more about Mr. Smythe.

"Incidentally," he added, "I have half a suspicion that this Mr. Smythe will bear some investigating himself. His face and his accent don't quite fit his name. I guess we'll let the Alien Enemy authorities have a talk with him while we've got our mind on 'false pretenses.'"

That was the end of my experiences with Mr. Smythe, but later I heard that the authorities had decided that he was too German to be safe at large and so they interned him.

In the mean while I went to live at the same hotel as Mr. Mitchell, who assumed responsibility for all my expenses and paid all my debts. When I added it all up I found I owed him more than two hundred dollars.

This indebtedness bothered me because I was anxious to get into the army and I did not want to go away without settling with my benefactor. By this time I could speak English fairly well and I thought I might possibly be able to pass myself off as an American if the recruiting-officer was not too inquisitive. I have learned so much more English since that time that I can't help laughing at my conceited notion that

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

I could ever have passed myself off as an American upon the strength of what I then knew.

The easiest way for me to earn some money quickly, naturally, was by means of my violin, but I did not know exactly how to go about securing an engagement. To arrange a concert required time and influence and some responsibility and capital, and I was anxious to settle up as quickly as possible.

Walking along a side-street, I heard the strains of a violin coming from the basement of a building. It was a sort of saloon and dancing-pavilion combined. I listened a moment to the wretched performance that was providing the time for the dancing, and then I went down the steps and walked into the place. There was a bar at one side of the room and small round tables, with no table-cloths, filled the rest of the place. Some men and women were dancing and others were seated at the tables, drinking. At one end was a platform raised about one foot from the ground, and upon that was a piano at which a rather seedy-looking young fellow was struggling violently. Beside him stood the violinist whose work I had heard on the street and who had just placed his violin on top of the piano and was now engaged in what was apparently a more gratifying task—swallowing a long drink of beer which was wafted mysteriously to him from behind the piano.

## IN THE LAND OF THE FREE

When a waiter came over to me to get my order I asked him, merely out of curiosity, how much a violinist like that could earn a week.

"If you're looking to steal this guy's job, kid, you might just as well blow, see? He's got it nailed down, and there ain't a chance in the world for yer. Been fiddlin' here for six mont's now, and been giving satisfaction. Drags down good money, too—eighteen dollars per—and the drinks! Why, he's even got the bulge on some of us guys—him a fiddler, dragging down more than a suds-carrier! What do yer know about that!"

I could hardly help laughing at the waiter's comparison of his "profession" with mine, even when mine was so poorly represented as it was in this case, but I said nothing.

The incident gave me an idea. Why not play for a week or two in some decent café or hotel?

At the first hotel I came to I went in and asked the manager how to go about securing a position of that kind. He gave me the name of some amusement agents who made a specialty of placing musical talent in cafés, and through them I secured a cabaret engagement at a well-known grill known as Fred's, at Geary and Mason streets. I was to play during meals and was to receive two hundred dollars per week for my services.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

The idea of playing at a cabaret was not particularly pleasing to me. It did not seem quite to measure up to the dignity of my profession. I had played before the Czar of Russia and had toured the capitals of Europe, and I felt it was far below my standing to play for the amusement of diners in a public restaurant—it was only a grade or two higher than the work of the “fiddler” on Sutter Street—who got “eighteen dollars per *and* the drinks.”

But there was no use in being too particular. My main object was to get enough money to settle up and enlist, and it didn’t matter much how I got the money as long as it was honestly earned.

I signed up with the proprietor. I would play twice a day for him. I was to be featured as a soloist, and, of course, there was to be a certain amount of advertising in which my name was to be played up big.

This was during the holiday season of 1917.

The advertising filled the grill at the hours when I was scheduled to play, and no doubt it proved a good investment for the proprietor, but at the end of the second week he decided to call the deal off.

“Your work is very fine, Mr. Iogolevitch,” he explained, “but I am afraid it is too good for café patrons. They come here to dance, you know, and they listen to music with their feet.

## IN THE LAND OF THE FREE

Anything aimed above their ankles goes over their heads! Foolish people, but what can we do?"

I did not argue the subject with him. With the four hundred dollars I had earned I would be able to pay off all my debts, and that was all I wanted. The way would then be clear for me to enlist.

Early in January, 1918, I presented myself at the recruiting-office on Market Street. This time I decided to call myself Paul Ingle, born in San Francisco, age eighteen, father and mother dead.

As I walked into the office the private sitting at the receiving desk turned to the sergeant and remarked in a voice not so low that I didn't overhear him:

"See who's here! He's the Roosian fiddler at Fred's!"

That killed all my plans, but as long as I was there I thought I would go as far as I could. It was useless to attempt to pass myself off as an American, however, and so I gave the facts concerning myself.

The sergeant was very much interested and said he would put in my application and see if anything could be done, but he thought I was "up against it."

"As the law stands, we won't take 'em under eighteen," he explained. "Of course, if you

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

can get Congress to change the law, why, that's different. Sorry, young feller, but that's how it stands."

I went home again very much discouraged. I had traveled a long way to take up again the fight against the Hun, but it seemed that my fighting days were over for a while.

That day I read an inspiring article in one of the magazines in which it was pointed out that there were more ways of fighting for America than by shouldering a gun or digging a trench or making shells.

"Many a man is eating his heart out," the article ran, "because, for one reason or another, he can't get over to France. Because he can't fight he concludes he can't help others to fight. That is a grave mistake. There are hundreds of ways to 'do your bit' without ever getting within a hundred miles of a gun or a munition-factory."

And then the article went on to enumerate various forms of war service—raising funds for the Red Cross and similar institutions, speeding up the work in industrial plants engaged in war work and other war-time activities. "Decide what you can do best and then arrange to do it for Uncle Sam!"

The article gave me a new angle. I had made a fair success as a soldier, but when I came to analyze my exploits I felt that whatever I had

## IN THE LAND OF THE FREE

accomplished was more the result of good fortune than any great military skill. As a matter of fact, how could I possibly have any military value when I had never had a chance to study the science and all I knew was what I had picked up incidentally in actual work?

The more I thought over this subject the more firmly I became convinced that my principal assets were my musical ability and my knowledge of conditions in Russia, both of which, I figured, might possibly be useful in the great cause. My musical talent I could capitalize in the form of concerts, and my knowledge of conditions, if properly presented to industrial workers, might help to "speed up" production. If I told them of the slaughter of Russian troops which I had witnessed and which was brought about solely by the lack of ammunition, and if I could convey to them even partially an idea of the privations which soldiers at the front have to endure, it might stimulate them and indirectly help the cause more than any direct help I could give as a soldier.

These possibilities made such a strong appeal to me that I decided to talk it all over with Mr. Mitchell, and he declared that I was entirely correct.

"You have done your best to enlist and you are not eligible, Paul," he argued. "But even if you were acceptable, I really believe that

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

your value to this country would be greatest in other ways than by your enlistment. We have plenty of men. The draft will keep our army up to the required strength, but unless we can get the men across—unless we can increase our merchant marine fast enough to bridge the ocean—all our men won't avail us anything. There is more valuable work to be done, Paul, by speeding up war work than there is by individual enlistments."

The upshot of this conversation and several others that followed was that I left for the East, where the opportunities to participate in war activities, we figured, were greater. I would forget all about wanting to fight for America and devote myself to the equally valuable task of helping others to fight harder.

## XIX

### UNDER THE AMERICAN EAGLE

I ARRIVED in New York while one of the Red Cross drives was in full swing. With letters from the various organizations for whom I had played in San Francisco, it was not difficult for me to get into the work in the East, and I was given plenty of opportunity to perform at concerts given under the auspices of the different patriotic and charitable organizations—and I didn't exact one-hundredth of the toll which my former manager, J. Mortimer Smythe would have demanded for my services.

At a meeting on the Liberty Platform in Madison Square I met Corporal Mouvet, of the French Foreign Legion. One of the compensations of the work I was now engaged in was the association it brought with people who had already accomplished great things and who were willing to give of their best to the great cause.

Corporal Mouvet was an American, but early in the war, long before America got into it, he had given up his career and joined the Foreign

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

Legion in France. At the request of the Red Cross I was wearing my uniform, and when Mouvet saw that I was a Russian he introduced himself to me, because he had spent some time in Russia and was very much interested in my country.

We exchanged experiences and that day we lunched together.

"What you tell me about the havoc that was worked in the Russian ranks because of the lack of ammunition makes me think," he said, "that your services would be more valuable as a speaker than as an artist. With all deference to your musical ability, we have lots of players here who can amuse an audience sufficiently to raise funds, but there are not many people in this country whose knowledge of actual conditions on the front might do more to raise enthusiasm among our war workers."

"That may be true. I have thought of it myself. The unfortunate part about it is that *I can* play, but *I can't* talk. I'm afraid I'll have to let my violin do my talking for me!"

"I didn't think I could talk, either, until I went at it. When you get up on the platform the first time you think you will never be able to go through with it, but all you've got to do is to forget the people in front of you for the moment and recall the horrors you have lived through—and then you go on talking and you

## UNDER THE AMERICAN EAGLE

see the eyes of the people in front of you opening wide and inviting you to continue and—why, it becomes the easiest thing in the world. You just let me have your papers, your credentials, and I'll talk to some of the leaders about you."

I accordingly turned my papers over to him, and a day or two later I received an invitation from Dr. Charles A. Eaton, head of the National Service Section of the United States Shipping Board, Emergency Fleet Corporation, to become a speaker for the United States government in shipyards and ammunition-plants throughout the country.

I presented myself at the headquarters of the bureau at the Manhattan Hotel, and there Doctor Eaton explained to me the kind of work that I would be asked to do and the value the government placed upon it. By the time he got through I felt that I had been wasting an awful lot of time trying to get into the army, which could very well get along without me, while I had overlooked a branch of service where my experience apparently would have proved of real value. The way Doctor Eaton put it, the tongue was mightier than the sword sometimes, and if I couldn't wield a sword there was no reason why I shouldn't wag my tongue.

My first assignment was to speak at the

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

Brooklyn Navy-Yard. Mouvet accompanied me. He was to speak, too. We rode to the Navy-Yard in a car driven by one of the Navy-Yard chauffeurs.

When we started from the hotel Doctor Eaton's words of encouragement were still ringing in my ears and I felt as brave as a lion, but by the time we got to the Brooklyn Bridge and I realized that in a few moments, perhaps, I would be facing an audience of working-men who would have difficulty in following my poor English, I began to get nervous, and I told Mouvet of my misgivings.

"Don't worry about that, Paul," he answered, reassuringly. "You tell those men some of the things you've told me, and they won't pay any attention to how you speak. Anyway, I will take up most of the time, and you will have to say only a few words. When you have a sincere message to give you will be surprised to find how easy it is to deliver it. The words just come by magic."

I was not nearly so sure about that as Mouvet. I was rather inclined to feel that the little English I knew would desert me when I needed it most, but we were now driving through the entrance of the Navy-Yard and there was no use worrying about the inevitable. I was there to speak and that was all there was to it.

We were taken right in to the commanding

## UNDER THE AMERICAN EAGLE

officer and reported. Mouvet asked him what the situation was in the Yard.

"Everything is fine," the officer answered. "The men are right up on their toes—giving all they've got to the cause. Of course, there are a few disturbers among them, and it is to offset the influence of this undercurrent that we need fellows like you to come here from time to time and tell us just why it is essential to work harder for Uncle Sam to-day than ever it was in history. Go to it, boys!"

As we were escorted to the Yard where several hundred of the men were assembled Mouvet turned to me and whispered: "I'm going to make some of these Bolsheviks cringe. Watch me!"

Corporal Mouvet got up on the platform and introduced himself. He wasted very little time in preliminaries. He gave them an account of what Germany had done to France, and as he recounted some of the things he had witnessed on the western front his face turned red, the veins stood out on his forehead, and he swung his clenched fists around vigorously to emphasize his arguments. The crowd listened eagerly to him and at each successive epithet that he applied to the Huns they cheered more heartily. At times he would call upon the men to show whether they agreed with him or not, and the immediate response his appeals always

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

evoked seemed to give him added impetus, and he wound up with his audience completely won.

There wasn't any doubt in my mind, then, of the wonderful effect a stirring speech can have, and I determined then and there to perfect myself in public speaking until I, too, could handle an audience as Mouvet had. That the men would go back to their various tasks more determined than ever to do their utmost for their country I was quite convinced. I know his words had aroused *my* fighting spirit, and when, after a few words of introduction, in which he apologized for my broken English, he made way for me on the platform, I had no longer any fear on my own account—I feared only that I might spoil the wonderful effect that Mouvet had created.

My experience on the concert stage, before and since the war, had made me "platform-wise." I was accustomed to large audiences. The sea of faces which proves so disconcerting to most people in their first appearance in public was no novelty to me. At the same time I was mindful of the great difference between this experience and my former appearances. Hitherto my point of contact with my audience had been an instrument of which I might modestly claim to have complete control. To-day it was different. To-day I had to wield an instrument—the spoken word—of which I had but an im-

## UNDER THE AMERICAN EAGLE

perfect command. With this unreliable weapon I had to capture an audience which no doubt contained many who were my superiors.

These fleeting thoughts occurred to me as I stepped toward the crowd, but they were forgotten with the first word I uttered.

I felt that behind me were the millions of men who had died for a noble cause, and in front of me were living millions urging me onward—imploring vengeance against the wicked Huns who had set the whole wide world on fire. Words came to me that I never dreamed I could use. The first cheer from the crowd came at the end of my first sentence. Some of the enthusiasm which Mouvet had aroused was still influencing them and I was getting the benefit of it. It acted like a stimulant to me and I went on without much faltering. Here and there I stumbled over a word or got mixed up in the middle of a sentence, but the thoughts came to me so quickly that if I found difficulty in expressing one I abandoned it in favor of another which pressed close behind.

Those powerful working-men were apparently not close critics. They didn't care much about English. What they wanted, apparently, was facts. They wanted to know why they were being asked to strain their bodies and limbs to fight a distant foe, and there were hundreds of weighty reasons that I could give them.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

I had been speaking for about five minutes when a whistle blew and the men started to leave the crowd. The time was up. I finished as gracefully as I could, thanking the men for their attention and urging them to greater efforts for the cause, and the cheers that they rendered as I concluded made me feel that perhaps, to some unmeasurable extent, I had contributed to the winning of the war just as truly as if I myself had wielded a hammer or bored a rivet hole.

Corporal Mouvet congratulated me on my speech. He said I had done well, but I am afraid a stenographic report of my actual words would read very funny. The experience demonstrated to me, however, that there was considerable virtue in this sort of war work, and I determined then and there to bend every effort to become a proficient speaker.

Accordingly, when, a day or two later, I received orders to go to Baltimore where I was to spend a week in the shipyards in that vicinity, I worked out a regular speech on paper. I felt that if I could commit a well-constructed speech to memory it would have more effect than any extemporaneous effort on my part, for, no matter how fluent I became, I was certain that I would never be able to present my thoughts as clearly on the spur of the moment as I would if I put them in writing under less pressure.

## UNDER THE AMERICAN EAGLE

That night I arrived in Baltimore. The next morning I was called for by a representative of the Baltimore Dry Docks and Shipbuilding Company. He drove me to the plant where ships were being built for the government and where work was going on at full speed day and night.

The manager of the plant took me through the place, and we came to an immense tool-room in the center of which a stand had been erected. It was all covered with American flags and assembled around it was a crowd of about three thousand men.

I was in my uniform and had all my medals on, and as the manager opened a path for me through the crowd they let out a tremendous cheer.

That heartened me, and when I had mounted the platform and faced my audience I decided to forget all about the speech I had partly committed to memory and launch out on an uncharted sea. It was the same sort of speech I had delivered at the Navy-Yard, and it aroused just as much enthusiasm, apparently. This time I was the only speaker and I had more time to go into some of my experiences on the Russian front. To vary the monotony I told them of my experience at Savendiki, which I had entered as a wandering violinist. Then I told them of our two men who had been captured by the Hun patrol and whose mutilated bodies had been

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

returned to us on the peasant's wagon the following day. I saw from the horror on their faces that I was arousing their ire against the Huns, and so I went on and told of the treatment they had accorded Vladimir when we were fellow-prisoners, and how they had beaten me.

If any one had uttered a pro-German sentiment right then I believe that crowd would have torn him limb from limb.

Realizing that they were all worked up to fever-heat against the cruel Huns, I then told them how the Allies had suffered at different times for lack of ammunition, giving them my own experiences by way of illustration. To see that our boys across the seas were always supplied with sufficient ammunition, I declared, was the important duty which rested upon the shoulders of those who were undertaking to build our ships. An hour's delay in the completion of a steel plate might not at first seem very serious, but when one stopped to think that the delay in delivering that particular plate to a shipyard might mean the same delay in the completion of a ship, and the hour's delay in the completion of the ship might mean that same hour's delay in the sailing of a cargo of ammunition, and that same hour's delay might mean an hour's delay in the arrival of supplies at a particular section in the front-line trenches where the war was raging at its height, and that, for

## UNDER THE AMERICAN EAGLE

lack of sufficient ammunition, the Allied barrage might fall down just long enough to enable the Huns to break through and slaughter thousands of our boys—then, I argued, the man who was responsible for the delay in the completion of that single steel plate had a lot to answer for.

The loud cheering that greeted this argument convinced me that the point had carried home, and I thought that was a good place to stop.

Later in the day I played for another group of men and made a short address in the same place, this time speaking in Russian to a group of workers who were my fellow-countrymen. A photograph was taken of the scene and was placed in the office of the company.

I had a very full week. In the daytime I addressed the workmen in various shipyards and in the evening the Jewish Welfare Board and similar organizations usually took me to the camps in the neighborhood, where I played for the soldiers.

Each day the work became easier for me. My English seemed to improve by leaps and bounds, and I began to gage the temperament of my audience more accurately and take advantage of the openings that presented themselves as I went along.

At one of the camps, when the gentleman in charge of the affair announced that the youngest war veteran on the Allied side was going to

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

address them and mentioned my name, I noticed one of the men jump up from his seat and make his way to the rear of the platform. After I finished speaking he came over and grabbed me in his arms. He had known me in Harbin when I was little. He was several years older than I and had served in the Russian army at the start of the war. Later he had come to the same conclusion I had—that after Russia dropped out of the war the only thing to do was to go to America and continue the fight from there. He had managed to get into the American army and was waiting to be sent across to fight on the western front. Although I was now firmly convinced that the work I was engaged in was of great importance, I could not help envying him.

When I returned to New York I started to study and analyze the labor situation seriously, and, in order to improve my elocution, I attended lectures and listened to experienced speakers. I heard many speakers address working-men in the course of my own work, and I invariably watched the audience carefully, while the speaking was going on, to see just what effect different arguments produced. In that way I learned what line of approach was most apt to get the farthest, for one audience of working-men was very similar to another. One of the things I noticed was that the men seemed to resent the scolding tactics which some of the

## UNDER THE AMERICAN EAGLE

speakers adopted. No doubt there were many slackers in every plant—in some cases “slacker” was undoubtedly too mild a word by far. But to refer to the whole audience as slackers, as some of the speakers did, and urge them to work doubly as hard as they were doing, was not, as far as I was able to observe, the best way to produce results.

The fact was, I believed, that the great majority of the men in the plants were already working to their utmost to win the fight for the Allies; there were some who, no doubt, could be induced to put more pep into their efforts, and there were some who had not yet awakened to the importance of the work they were engaged in. The traitors in the ranks, the men who were maliciously sowing seeds of sedition and attempting to arouse dissatisfaction and strikes in order to aid the enemy, these, I realized, no amount of eloquence on our part could possibly convert.

My general plan in addressing these gatherings, therefore, was to point out what wonderful work they were already doing and explain to them by vivid illustrations of conditions on the front just what their work meant to the boys in the trenches, and then I would urge them, if possible, to speed up just one notch, and, if that wasn’t possible, then, for Heaven’s sake, to keep going at the same speed.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

As the contacts between these men and myself became more and more frequent I got a better hold of them. I endeavored to make them forget that they came of various nationalities. I asked them to realize that they were all Americans and that I was addressing them as Americans—not as Russians, Italians, Poles, or whatever nationality they had originally claimed.

I reminded them what German militarism had done to the people of Europe, how millions of men and women had already paid with their lives and happiness in their fight against autocracy. I reminded them how they had left their native homes in search of freedom and democracy and had settled in this country because here they expected to find them, and how they now had a chance to back up the men who were leaving their homes in this free country to carry on the fight in Europe for the benefit of all.

"You left Europe, remember, to find freedom in America," I said. "Our boys have left free America to fight autocracy in Europe. You came to America because you wanted to be free. Americans are now going to Europe to make the whole world free. Back them up!"

Then I would ask them to raise their right hands and pledge their loyalty to the cause. Every hand would go up, naturally, but most

## UNDER THE AMERICAN EAGLE

of them, I felt, went up spontaneously and sincerely.

In Waterbury, Connecticut, I spoke under the auspices of the United States Department of Labor. It was during one of the hottest spells of the summer and frequently I found it necessary to remove my coat. My exertions would invariably leave me almost drowned in perspiration, and the consequence was that I caught cold and became so hoarse that for a while I had to discontinue speaking.

At a dinner in Newark, New Jersey, after I was able to talk again, I had the honor of speaking and playing before the Governor, the Hon. Walter E. Edge, a number of Senators and other prominent men. The dinner was in connection with one of the drives for funds for the war sufferers, and as my playing came immediately before the collection was taken up, and a very handsome sum was contributed by those present, I had the satisfaction of feeling that the charms of my music perhaps had helped to soften their hearts and loosen their purse-strings.

During all this time it was impossible for me to get into communication with my family. Cables and letters were of no avail because of the chaotic conditions in Russia. I was getting rather discouraged about this phase of my own affairs when I received word that my family had left Japan for the United States and would

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

arrive within a week in San Francisco. By the same medium I learned that my father, since the overthrow of the Kerensky government, had left Russia and joined the Siberian forces under General Semenoff, where he had acted as Surgeon-General.

At this moment I received instructions from the Shipping Board to go immediately to Connecticut to address the men in several ammunition-plants where labor troubles were brewing. The great German drive had been stopped and all the Allies were concentrating their forces on beating them back once and for all. All our hopes were in Marshal Foch. It was the most critical period of the whole war. Every man and every bit of force was being utilized. It was a time which called for the last ounce of reserve energy that every one of us could command. It was certainly no time to think of personal desires. I was very anxious to see my family and my thoughts turned in the direction of California, but it was out of the question. And so I went to Connecticut instead.

The center of the trouble seemed to be at a government steel-plant. The meeting I was to address was held in a section of the plant where the steel was forged, and most of the men who stood around the improvised platform were half naked. Their faces were hot and red and blackened with smoke, which made them look very



"COURAGE AND BRAVERY WON'T WIN A WAR WITHOUT  
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## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

grim when an occasional glare from one of the furnaces would light up their countenances. The heat of the place was so stifling that I had all I could do to stand it.

Very stern and determined those men looked as I scanned their faces in the glow which spasmodically illuminated the smoke-darkened room. To ask these men to do more than they were already doing seemed presumptuous, and yet when I saw the masses of steel lying around the room and recalled the storm of shot and shell that the Germans were able to pour into our panic-stricken ranks because we had no ammunition with which to resist them, I forgot the temporary discomfort of the men in front of me and thought only of the plight of their brothers at the front.

"Courage and bravery won't win a war without ammunition to back them up," I declared. "The failure of Russia in this war can be traced to her lack of unity and ammunition. At the beginning of the war, when Russia was well supplied she was successful. Then the supply of ammunition was cut off and defeat became inevitable.

"The Russian retreat meant not only loss of territory, but the loss of hundreds of thousands of men—soldiers and the inhabitants of the captured territory—perhaps workmen like you and their women and children.

## UNDER THE AMERICAN EAGLE

"Look back again to 1917 when the revolution broke out. There we see the results of lack of organization. Finally after a long struggle the old form of government was overthrown and we had freedom—but without unity what has freedom brought? Ours is a country immensely wealthy in natural resources, but there is no organization and the people are starving to death.

"All of this is the result of the lack of ammunition—for when the Russians yielded to the undermining influence of German propagandists and began to lose faith in their own country the power of that country was shattered. Germany to-day has plenty of ammunition because, at the point of the bayonet, she is compelling every man in the ammunition-factories to stick to his job.

"Now, men, let us show the Germans that no external force will make a workman for democracy—it is only the force from within, the force that your own hearts and sense of justice will dictate to you that will supply our armies with more than enough ammunition to win the war. 'A chain is only as strong as its weakest link,' and every man who fails to do his duty by remaining away from his war job not only fails to stand by the majority of you men here, but goes against you by permitting the Germans to get just that much ahead of you.

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

"If there are any here who are not working as hard as they can or who stay off the job, ask them why they do so. If it is merely through ignorance, explain the situation to them and make them see the light. If, however, it is deliberate and malicious, I leave it to you to treat them as you see fit!"

The crowd cheered so long and loud at this point that I began to wonder whether the government hadn't sent me to the wrong plant. There didn't seem to be much dissatisfaction here. I congratulated the men on the splendid work they had been doing and wished them all good luck. I learned afterward that the threatened strike at this plant never took place.

When I returned to New York I received word by wire that my father was on his way across the continent to New York, and the very next day he arrived, none the worse for all the dangers he had been through. It was a wonderful thing for us to be reunited in this far corner of the world, far away from the distractions and sorrows of war-stricken Europe.

A day or two later I took my father with me on some of my speaking trips, and he addressed some of the foreign audiences in Russian, Polish, and other Slavic languages.

By the time the rest of my family arrived, a few weeks later, we had secured an apartment

## UNDER THE AMERICAN EAGLE

in New York, and when we were once again united in a place we could call home our happiness was indescribable.

There was still much work to be done, however. The Shipping Board "loaned" me from time to time to the Ordnance Department to speak at various munition-factories, and I accompanied Doctor Eaton on a speaking tour through Philadelphia, where we addressed the employees of the Emergency Fleet Corporation.

It was on this tour that I met Charles M. Schwab. His true Americanism stood out all over him. From the very first moment I saw him my feeling of respect and admiration for him was profound. His presence on the platform when I spoke was a constant source of inspiration to me. It was through him, incidentally, that I received one of the most valued souvenirs of my war work—an autographed photograph of President Wilson!

On my way back from Philadelphia I addressed the employees of Thomas A. Edison, at Orange, New Jersey, and had the honor of an interview with that wonderful man. Later I made a violin record at the Edison laboratories.

At a farewell dinner to Doctor Eaton, at which we all paid tribute to the inspiration which we had received from his remarkable leadership, he announced that the National Service Section would present several workers of the

## THE YOUNG RUSSIAN CORPORAL

United States Shipping Board with medals, and I got mine a short time later.

When my war work came to an end my first impulse was to return to my native land, look up my old instructor and devote the rest of my life to music. I owed a lot to my violin; it had served me more than I had ever served it.

But then I thought of the future of Russia and how much she owed to the part America had played in the winning of the war. It seemed to me that if I gave up my music and devoted the rest of my life to the task of bringing Russia and America—so much alike in so many respects—into closer relations for their common benefit, I would be serving at once the two nations in whose welfare I am most deeply interested.

And that is what I am going to do.

THE END















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